

# The Social Science Bulletin

February, 1953

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THE SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH CENTER

Mississippi State College

## *The Vision of the Humanistic Scholar*

by

Herbert Drennon<sup>1</sup>

From the humanistic standpoint, it is the centuries, and not the moments, that should be viewed in trying to evaluate the achievements of man in his long march toward civilization. In giving us a proper perspective wherewith to judge the spiritual values we are obliged to cherish and sustain, in order to find life worthwhile, the humanistic scholar renders his greatest service to mankind. In his vision, we men of lesser hope find reason to sustain our faith that ultimately truth and the rightness of things will prevail. It is, indeed, the privilege of the true humanist to inspire us and sustain our faith in days of peril like these.

Taking the long perspective of things, the humanist sees man emerge centuries ago from the dark shadows of ignorance and superstition, bearing in his mind the first feeble torch of learning, lit at the altar of human experience, a torch that through the ages has grown larger and brighter as man has somehow stumbled forward in his progress toward what we call civilization. The humanist sees early man shaping tools and instruments wherewith to do his work and fight his battles for existence. He sees man bending in awe and reverence before the mysteries of the universe which he does not understand. He sees man developing his institutions, and learning to communicate his thoughts and feelings by means of written symbols. He sees man build his ancient civilizations and sees those civilizations pass on to make way for a new order of things. He sees the brilliant display of the human intellect in that coterie of great thinkers whom Greece gave to the world. He sees man as a monk keeping the torch of learning aflame in dimly lit monasteries while clouds of ignorance lowered over the land. He sees man breaking the chrysalis of traditional authority during the Renaissance to emerge with a new vision and a new hope. He sees man as scientist setting about to reduce the laws of the universe to intelligible formulae in order to build a new civilization which we call modern. And finally the humanist sees his own colleagues, and colleagues in other colleges and universities, and students everywhere throughout the world, as heirs to the achievements of man in the past and as participants in the drama of man's march toward civilization.

It is a glorious experience to study the unfolding drama of man's quest for knowledge. That drama, inspired by dreams and ideals, has been slowly written by man's feeble and faltering hand under conditions of toil, and pain and sacrifice. Those who annually graduate from our colleges and universities become a part of that brotherhood who, by virtue of special training and native endowment, have been the light-bearers of human culture in the past. It should be the peculiar duty and responsibility of college-bred men and women to maintain the sacred obligations of this union, and to hold high the lamp of learning that its flame may glow in the darkened recesses of the land. The college-bred should find inspiration in the fact that he has an opportunity to add his voice to the voices of the great seekers of learning in the past who were witnesses for truth in man's struggle upward.

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Dr. Drennon is professor of English, head of the English department, dean of the graduate school, and dean of the college at Mississippi State. This address was delivered on December 9, 1952, to the local chapter of the A.A.U.P. In a somewhat different form, it had been published in the Bulletin of the American Colleges, May, 1945.

College students especially should have their zeal for knowledge kindled, their love of truth quickened and their desire to play a significant part in weaving the pattern of human culture strengthened and inspired. A humanistic study of the pattern of human culture reveals at least four great episodes that constitute the drama of man's pursuit of knowledge. Man has been and is an explorer in the moral, imaginative, intellectual and social realms, and each of his explorations has brought to him rich returns which are the heritage of our day and generation. One of the fundamental functions of education is to familiarize the student with the cultural heritage that is his for the seeking. Another fundamental function is to quicken a desire in the student to exploit that cultural heritage by making it his own.

Man's adventure into the moral realm has concerned itself with the problem of the good life. The story of man's search for moral truth is recorded in the words of the priest and the prophet, in the proverbs of the sages, in the sayings of the moral philosophers and in the teachings of the founders of the world's great religions. Man's concern with the good life peculiarly sets him apart from all other living creatures, for man, so far as we know, is the only creature that deliberately sets up for himself a code of conduct involving ideals and sanctions which he feels himself morally responsible to observe, in order to live the good life, and which he observes oftentimes at the cost of life itself. Man's pursuit of moral truth is rich with the names of men and women who have kept the faith even unto death itself and in so doing enriched the moral heritage we enjoy today. Their struggle to realize moral ideals constitutes a vital chapter in human history that tells the story of man's search for the good life. Such stories dealing with the heroic and noble in human nature keep us from losing faith in the good cause that it is the peculiar duty of college-bred men and women to champion.

Another important chapter in the history of human culture concerns man's exploration into the realm of the imaginative. For untold centuries man consumed his time in the pursuit of creature comforts, food, shelter and clothing, and the struggle for existence was so strenuous that he never thrilled to the beauty of the rose, the song of the lark, the splendor of the stars, or a summer rainbow spanning the heavens like a smile of God. But at last a man was born who had the soul of an artist. Many years ago archaeologists discovered in a cave in Europe, carved upon its walls, the perfect likeness of a reindeer, and that discovery revealed a new chapter in man's cultural development. From time out of mind the reindeer to man had been a beast of burden and a source of food. One day, however, a cavedweller suddenly saw that the reindeer was a creature of light, form, and graceful movements and his creative imagination set to work to reproduce upon the darkened walls of his cave this lovely creature that had pleased him with its grace, and in so doing he achieved a very important milestone along the journey of man's march toward civilization.

Sometimes we talk about the great step forward man took when he first became a tool-using animal. We usually mean tools made of a material substance--of stone, and bronze and iron. Such tools are the creation of man's practical imagination that fashions things primarily for use. It was perhaps a greater discovery when man began to use his creative imagination to fashion things not for use alone but to satisfy his love of the beautiful. Here again he set himself apart from all other living creatures in that he is the only creature, so far as we know, that builds or creates to please artistic taste.

On the wings of creative imagination man voyages beyond the limits of time and space. Other creatures must live in the present but man, if he chooses, can in an instant transport himself to some golden age in the past or build for himself some ideal utopia in the future. Biologists tell us that animals must adjust

themselves to their physical environment or perish. Man, too, as a physical creature pays the price of destruction, if he cannot adjust himself to the physical world in which he lives. But, whereas an animal is at the mercy of its physical environment, man, were it not for his creative imagination, would also be at the mercy of his moral and spiritual environment. Man, however, has been able to endure spiritually because his creative imagination enables him to remould the world nearer to the heart's desire. If his spiritual environment displeases him, man's creative imagination affords him an avenue of escape. It enables him to live in a lost Eden or a newly found Jerusalem. In short, it gives him the hope of better days to come. The world of literature and music, the great art galleries and the mighty cathedrals, with spires stealing up to the silent stars, represent the fruits of man's creative imagination.

In music, song and story, in painting, sculpture and architecture, we read the record of man's exploration into the realm of the imaginative. Before the Gothic cathedral could lift its spires heavenward, it had to exist in the creative imagination of an architect; before the scene of "The Last Supper" was immortalized in colors upon canvas, it had to exist in the creative imagination of a painter. The Iliad of Homer, the Divine Comedy of Dante, the Lear of Shakespeare, the Paradise Lost of Milton, the New Atlantis of Bacon, the Prometheus Unbound of Shelley and The Magic Mountain of Thomas Mann are fruits of the creative imagination, and we enjoy them by means of the creative imagination just as we enjoy the splendor of the sunset or the soft murmur of a brook.

College education should familiarize the student with many of the results of man's creative genius; it should intensify the student's love and appreciation of the aesthetic heritage of the race. And if the teacher is to enrich the lives of those he teaches with a love of beautiful things, his own life must be so enriched.

Another chapter in human culture concerns man's exploration into the intellectual realm. It was a stirring moment in man's history when he became a reflective creature and began to reason about his destiny. He who first asked himself the questions: Who am I? Whence am I? and Whither am I going? asked questions that have challenged man the thinker for definite answers through the ages. Man has been called the great mystery and riddle of the universe. Of him Shakespeare wrote: "What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason! How infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals!" The French philosopher Pascal said that "man is a reed, the most feeble thing in nature, but he is a thinking reed!" Because man is a thinking reed, he has continually sought an explanation of his own mystery. The story of that search is written in the religious, philosophical and scientific books of the world. Sometimes man has said that he is a child of the dust and that his destination is the dust. Sometimes man has said that he is a child of the spirit and that his destination is a spiritual one. Sometimes man has said that the mystery of his existence and destiny is beyond his finite power to fathom. Then he has turned to religious faith, and, in the words of Tennyson, said:

Strong Son of God, immortal Love,  
Whom we that have not seen they face,  
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,  
Believing where we cannot prove.

Having said this, man has humbly added that the ultimate answer to his riddle lies beyond the veil which someday God will lift. Whatever may be the answer, when the final story is told, man's reason will have written splendid chapters upon the subject.



Man has not only philosophized about the riddle of his own existence but he has tried to solve the riddle of the universe in which he lives. In the words of Francis Bacon he has taken the whole world to be his province of knowledge. From time immemorial the stars in their courses have challenged man's attention. More and more his reason has reached out into infinite space, seeking to chart the laws whereby this universe is governed. As his mind has explored the heavens, observing the number of astronomical bodies that swing true to their course in periodic regularity, he has been moved to exclaim with the immortal Kepler that man thinks God's thoughts after him.

Whether man has let his reason soar into the infinite expanse of the heavens above or into the infinitesimal world harbored in the atom, his discoveries have been great tributes to the ingenuity of the human intellect. In proportion to the increase of his understanding of the laws that govern his universe, man has increased his mastery over nature, making her a ready and obedient servant in the creation of a better world in which to live. To the ingenuity of man's intellect we owe the marvelous discoveries in the world of science and invention, which have made the material progress of modern times possible. Man's inventive genius has freed him from many of the limitations of space and time. His world is no longer the little province in which he lives. Within our own generation, the development of the radio and television has made it possible to bring the intellectual and emotional forces of the world to one's own fireside. The world's best artists, musicians, preachers, teachers, statesmen, and entertainers may now become available to the humblest citizen. In spite of wars and rumors of wars, as well as other destructive forces, man has achieved many intellectual conquests in his struggle for civilization. College students should make a modest share of the intellectual heritage their own, and if we as teachers are to enlighten the lives of those we teach with knowledge, our own lives must have been so enlightened.

The last great exploration to be mentioned in this discussion lies in the social realm. The record of that exploration is written in the social, historical and legal literature of the world, and the evidence of that exploration is found in the institutions of society--the family, the church, the school and the state. The motivation of that exploration has concerned itself with the problem of how man can live with man and nation with nation in peace and harmony. This is the great problem for which man's intellectual ingenuity has found no satisfactory solution. This does not mean, however, that man has made no progress in this particular sphere. He has gone far in the development of such social institutions as the family, the school, the church and the state. The family today as an institution of society is firmly established. On the whole, family life is more secure and happy. The school, more than ever before, has become a great agency for the spread of learning, and the broadening of man's intellectual horizon and enrichment of his cultural insight. The church has become more conscious of its mission to chasten the spiritual life of man and to inculcate the gospel of neighborliness and brotherly love into the lives of those who attend upon its altar. The state has become more humane in its regard for the well-being of its citizens than the state has ever been before.

The great problem in the social realm at the present time is how to improve a better understanding among nations. In spite of the work of a few idealists, international relationships are still governed by the law of expedience rather than by the law of right and justice. There are those who feel that the very fate of modern civilization is threatened because nations are unwilling to develop the spirit of the good neighbor in dealing with one another. Internationally, our ethical code remains in a primitive state. Many nations continue to be like feuding families, motivated in their conduct toward one another by a spirit of suspicion and clannish

hatred. The establishment of the United Nations represents man's greatest efforts to find a means of developing international good will and creating a world at peace, yet a delegate of one of the world's greatest powers cynically stated recently that it is not an agency of peace. Modern man has still to learn the lesson of international good will. As I see it, humanistic education has here its greatest task in the immediate future, which is to build up an international code of conduct that will bind nations together in a working harmony just as families are bound together to form the state itself. In spite of the events of the hour, the United Nations carries within its organization our greatest hope for final peace in the world.

In 1794, the Scottish poet Robert Burns, amid the furrows of his modest farm in his beloved Scotland, caught a vision of a day to come when "man to man, the world o'er shall brothers be for all that." A little more than a hundred years ago, Alfred Lord Tennyson envisioned the coming of a day when the battle flags will be furled "in the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world." Someday, in spite of the evils of the present hour, man will catch the light of promise again of better days to come. It should be the purpose of humanistic education to keep that light of promise shining brightly. When the last bomb has been dropped, the last ship sunk and the last gun fired, there must still be burning in the hearts of millions in this and other lands the flaming desire to rebuild the world where men everywhere may live at peace with their neighbors. The ideal of the brotherhood of man, since its pronouncement nearly two thousand years ago, has been cherished in the bosoms of many peoples and in many lands. Man's exploration into the social realm, trying to make this dream of universal brotherhood come true, time, we hope, will ultimately bring to a fruitful issue.

In this discussion, I have tried to sketch briefly some of man's explorations into the moral, imaginative, intellectual and social realms, and to indicate how the results of these explorations constitute the humanistic heritage of our world today. As stated in the beginning, man's quest of intellectual and spiritual experience unfolds a magnificent drama in human history. By many avenues man has approached the road that leads to the Palace of Wisdom. That road beckons us all on. We may never reach the portals of that palace for, like all ideal things of the spirit, the Palace of Wisdom is built in the realm of dreams. But the road to the Palace of Wisdom can be a golden road to travel, if the vision of the humanist lights the way.

## Community Studies - What and How?

*With a Statement of the Role of the Division of Sociology  
and Rural Life at Mississippi State College*

by

Raymond Payne<sup>1</sup>

Among sociologists confusion is the order of the day with regard to the community phenomenon. The very term is the proverbial hat at the drop of which we can begin some of our juiciest fights.

However, a look at some currently operative definitions reveals that on most elements observers do agree. All who speak of the community either state or imply that it is a *locality grouping*: that it is a social organization with an *area base*, that it covers a restricted or delimitable portion of the earth's surface. Loomis and Beegle, in *Rural Social Systems*, make this statement: "The fact that man has not made himself a free agent in space means that the area he covers to meet his everyday needs is restricted. Agencies set up to service these needs, therefore, will have a spatial orbit and will serve a spacially limited clientele."

But even with regard to the area element, all is not sweetness and light. How much area is the sixty-four dollar question. Nor can this question be attacked directly; rather the answer must be inferred from other comments. Granted that the community is an area, then statements are made that within the area are people and their institutions, or service agencies. Ensminger stated that a community can be capable of providing a nearly complete set of services, considered in relation to the needs of the people. Maciver says, "The mark of a community is that one's life may be lived wholly within it, that one's social relationships may be found within it." Again, Butterfield, about the time of the First World War, 1919, thought of a true community as one "...that is more or less self-sufficing. It possesses such service agencies as the people of the community need."

Thus, while there is some hedging by means of terms like "more or less", and "relatively", it is generally agreed that self-sufficiency is a mark of the community. How large is the community, then? Just before the First World War, as a result of the first adequate community study, the thing was described by Galpin as being a team-haul: the size which could be covered, "there and back", by horse-drawn vehicle, in time to eat supper with the family at night. Indeed, such an area probably at that time did include most of the services required by the people of the area, probably included most of the need-meeting behavior of the people living within the area, and probably included most of the social relationships of the people.

But if the contemporary community is also to include most of the social relationships of a grouping of people, I believe it necessary to include a somewhat larger area. A Buick-haul or an International Pick-up haul is not exactly like a team haul; the need systems of present-day Americans are somewhat different from those of even a few decades ago.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Payne is Associate Professor in the division of Sociology and Rural Life at Mississippi State College. His research activities are conducted in the Agricultural Experiment Station and in the Social Science Research Center. This paper was delivered by Mr. Payne at the Mississippi Agricultural Experiment Station workers annual meeting in December, 1952.



To summarize at this point: a community is said to be a social organization, composed of people and their service agencies, within a contiguous and/or limited area, within which there exist the means for satisfying most of the needs of most of the people.

Community studies have followed about this sequence: earliest ones were concerned very largely with delimitation, based largely on trade behavior. Then came a period during which studies were oriented toward distinguishing the community from the neighborhood, another locality grouping. To this was added the inventorying of community services, and the attack on the sorts of "psychological" feelings of the people toward the community, the area, each other, and the service agencies in the area. There was, of course, extensive overlapping. This brings us right down to the present. But some queer things have happened. Every discourse on the community has included some statement to the effect that the community is changing; some even say it has disappeared from large segments of the American scene.

But despite all these years of admitted change, investigators continue to use, with notable exceptions, Galpin's 1913 method of identifying communities; the method proposed by Sanders and Ensminger in 1932 has been paid lip service, but is not utilized to any great extent in research; this is called the neighborhood cluster method -- saying that a community is composed of a cluster of neighborhoods which "hang" together. But by and large the very people who academically admit that the community has changed, that it is a nearly self-sufficient unit, assume that the people know what their community is, and base its limits upon "identification or expressed feeling of belongingness", balanced is some obscure way with the trade-area concept. And the "balancing" is a difficult task. The unit with which people identify and to which they feel they belong is small; the trade area is becoming larger and larger.

So, we find both in writing and in everyday usage, the term being applied to everything from New York City, Paducah, to Octoc, Mississippi.

Selz Mayo, of North Carolina, in a recent report, stated that by "community" he meant the first social grouping outside the family, thus either denying an intervening neighborhood or admitting that the term community should be applied to the thing usually thought of as neighborhood. In a state not too far from here, not too far at all, the Extension Service is implementing a community development program; the "communities" being "developed" include, by statement, 10 or 12 to 50 or 60 families.

How can the division enter such a turbelent area of study, and emerge with a justifiable program? First, by making some assumptions. One basic assumption is that the community is an objective thing, that it has limits and other characteristics which sets it apart from other similar or different objects. Certainly, the community has changed since Galpin's days. Indeed, it is even possible that the community Galpin and Butterfield talked about 35 or 40 years ago has disappeared entirely from our society, and we now have a new ecological entity, the town centered community, a poor-nameless thing seen vaguely by both folk and social scientists, but not adequately documented.

Communities were not dropped full-blown from heaven -- people built them through their need-meeting behavior. Focus, then, upon that behavior which might



appear as "community building" behavior, and there will emerge a better understanding of the product.

Communities are never rigid, or fixed; they are ever-changing; they change not in and of themselves, nor by some mystical forces, but by the action of people. Focus upon the community-changing behavior of the people in an area to learn more about the community.

Communities are more or less continuing entities. That is, they are maintained for a greater or shorter length of time, certainly long enough to be of interest in working with and understanding people. They are maintained only through the action of people.

It is here that our research program at Mississippi State College proposes to enter the field: the study of community should, we say, focus upon human behavior, as it is unitized and sequentialized in the form of local action.

The Division of Sociology and Rural Life at Mississippi State College is extensively involved in community studies. The division is in the midst of collecting data on the so-called community organizations in the state, and is beginning the process of setting up a study on the sponsoring agencies of community development in Mississippi. These two projects are cooperatively conducted by the Social Science Research Center and the Agricultural Experiment Station of Mississippi State College. Three members of the division are engaged either actively or in consultive capacities in these projects. A third one is in the planning stage, and it is to begin the division's long-range program of community studies.

H. S. Johnson, former organization specialist with the Mississippi Agricultural Extension Service, wrote in a bulletin to the effect that community is a feeling, a feeling which exists in any locality where people are sharing problems and are working together in solving those problems. You may surmise that I, personally, do not hold with this view, in the strictest sense. However, it points up the fact that the key to the consideration of community is "the working together of people", even though the people of an area may not realize that they are actually working together.

Working together is another way of saying that people are (1) acting, (2) acting together, and (3) acting together within an area. Twisting this again slightly to fit my personal biases in terminology, people in a community behave in such ways that they are in relationship with each other. It is at this point that the division can grab on to the whole subject and get to work. What kinds of action can we find in community areas which exhibit cooperation, i.e., which are directed toward the common weal? We think that probably the so-called "civic project" will fit the bill. Why will people pool their energies to plan and execute projects in the community the benefits of which will accrue to others besides themselves and their immediate families? Yet we see this happening every week and every month in the typical American community. Why will a person, perhaps in the name of an organization of which he is a member, spend long hours "talking up" some project, even though he is not getting paid, even though it might take him away from his job or family or hobby? Or, I might ask, why do these things happen in some communities, while they don't happen in others?

These are some of the why's; there are other questions to be asked which we feel will add immeasurably to the storehouse of knowledge of people and social life of man. For instance, what projects, what actions are taking place? What types would people like to do? What things will they refuse to do -- the big question, and the one, incidentally, in which I am personally most interested? How are cooperative actions carried out in the community? Several "how" questions will be built into the first phase of the study. How do local people get their ideas for projects? How do they gain immediate support for the idea? How do they go about extending the interest in and support for the idea? How do they avoid having the idea squelched by some person, agency, or special interest grouping which stands, or thinks it stands, to lose by having the project carried out? How does the idea get translated into action?

These last few remarks have been more than somewhat abstract, I admit. Let me attempt to clarify by stating just what we are proposing to do.

We will go into some towns, chosen because we suspect them capable of being the centers of these new (larger) town-centered communities I have been talking about.

We will look around, asking about things which have been done by cooperative action. It might be a community center building; maybe road or street markers which are not state issue; maybe even lights on the ball field. Up to this point we will be asking "What," using back issues of newspapers, our eyes, and interviews of people - in short - nosing around.

The next step will be to take each *what* we have found--say lights on the ball field. Then we ask *who* did it, and *who* had the first idea to do it.

Then of each *who* -- the one who had the original idea to put lights on the ball field -- we will ask: *How* did you get this idea? Then, *to whom* did you go with the idea? Were they relatives, friends, neighbors, fellow workers? Then, when it came time to translate the idea into action, *to whom* did you go with the idea -- the town government, the county, some organization? Then a very crucial question comes: "Whom or what organization or grouping did you *purposely* by-pass in the process, and (of course) *why*?"

By this process we hope to derive some tentative working hypotheses in at least these areas:

1. The phenomenon of local, voluntary, cooperative action as a process - a process extending from stimulus to idea to plan to proposal -- into action -- to result.
2. The value systems in the communities. The projects will have been perceived as improvements, a fact from which may be inferred people's perceptions of what needed improving, what will improve local conditions, and so forth.
3. The problem configuration, a subjective thing, and inferrable as with the value systems -- actually the same thing.
4. The power centers in the community. We can have a look at the persons or groupings which could kill an idea, or which could insure its success, and we will be able to find out quite a bit about who controls whom.

5. Sources of ideas: channels of communication into the community through which stimuli for action are interjected into the community.

6. And we may even get some ammunition with which actively to join the fight over *what is a community*." By finding who works in relation to whom, and whose actions affect whom to any significant degree we will have determined empirically by the use of a new tool the extent of the contemporary socio-geographic unit worthy of the name "community."

Thus, the *community* is seen as the *arena* of study of *many phenomena*. The *arena* because it is the socio-geographic unit within which people meet most of their needs. *Many phenomena* because the community is a social organization including people of both sexes and all ages, many occupations, many religions, many races, many value systems, many problems, many of everything human. Then, finally, *action* is seen as the appropriate focus of study because that is the form in which social life most readily manifests itself to the observer.

# *The Place of the States in American Government*

by

Gordon K. Bryan<sup>1</sup>

This has been an extremely controversial subject throughout the history of the United States. At times, the controversy has subsided and remained relatively dormant, only to flare up in heated debate again and again. The place of the states in the American federal system has been ponderously considered by bench and bar; it has been profoundly and philosophically discussed in learned circles and in public debates, and on occasion has even found its way into the pulpit. Campaign platforms have repeatedly resounded, often in hysterical tones, with echoes of this traditional controversy. And it appears that the end is not yet in sight.

Aside from the fact of continuing controversy, what can be said at this time of the place of the states in American government? At least a few observations may be made. If we have the will to learn, experience teaches us more than argument. We have often heard it said that the national government has been constantly encroaching upon the powers of the states. That the powers and functions of the national government have been vastly expanded none would deny, nor would any deny the trend of centralization that has been in progress. Experience teaches this, and argument cannot change it.

Experience also teaches that in thinking about the role of the states attention is often centered on only one aspect of the problem, namely, national-state relations and what appears to be a shift of power from the states to the national government. Considering the matter in this light, various schools of thought have developed. On one hand we have the view that the states are outmoded, artificial, and inadequate as units of government -- unable to cope with present and future problems, and that they are destined to fade away. Something of this attitude has been recently expressed by William Y. Elliott in The Need for Constitutional Reform (1949), by Robert S. Allen in Our Sovereign State (1949), by Harold Laski in The American Democracy (1948), and in the 1880's by Lord Bryce in The American Commonwealth (1889), and John W. Burgess in the Political Science Quarterly (1886).

Others, less pessimistic about the place of the states in American government, have expressed deep concern, bordering in some instances upon alarm, at the shift of power from the states to the national government. For example, those of us who have kept up with the proceedings of recent Governors' Conferences, know the extent to which misgivings have there been voiced about the position of the states. Typical of such views were those expressed by Governor Peterson of Nebraska in the opening address at the Governors' Conference at Houston, Texas, in June of this year, where he said in part: "Personally, I feel that unless our states are to lose much of their purpose in being, we must reverse the trend (of centralization) and return as much power as possible to the state capitols. This will not be easy to do - first, because a whole generation has grown used to running to Washington for assistance whenever any difficulty has been encountered; second, because those in government at the federal level enjoy empire building as much as do any other human beings; and third, because our states have not always been willing to assume their responsibilities."

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Herewith we publish a paper delivered by Dr. Bryan at the annual meeting of the Southern Political Science Association, in Nashville, on November 6. Dr. Bryan appeared on a panel which discussed the subject, "Problems in State Government."



These criticisms and warnings can serve a useful purpose in that they may stimulate thought and create a sharper awareness of potential consequences for the states implicit in extreme national-state centralization. And there are those who have compared the more extreme critics of the states to the "Muckrakers" of an earlier era. Whether such comparison is an apt one or not, it might be well to remember that "muckraking", unpalatable though it may be, has been known to give way to constructive reforms.

Extreme condemnation of the states, holding out little promise of any significant role for them in the future, does not seem justified, however, when other aspects of the total American experience in government are taken into account.

Looking at the state-local side of the picture, we see the same trend toward centralization. Experience shows that the states, as well as the national government, have greatly expanded their functions and powers, in some instances taking over completely, or controlling in large part, functions traditionally regarded as local. Thus, the process of centralization has been going on throughout the entire governmental system. This is a basic fact which should be kept in mind in any consideration of the place of the states in American government.

Consequently, it does not seem entirely accurate to say that national powers have grown at the expense of the states. Rather, what we have been experiencing is a vast expansion of the role of government in the lives of the American people at all levels, state and local as well as national. Natural consequences of growth accompanied by a basic change in the people's attitude toward government accounts in large part for this enlargement of the scope of governmental functions and powers. The earlier laissez faire view of government as a negative influence has given way to a conception of government as a positive influence, and this has produced an ever-increasing popular demand for public services and functions. There is little likelihood that this pressure upon government for services will diminish in the future. On the contrary, it gives promise of increasing; and, whether for good or ill, it appears that we shall continue to have the service state with us.

This poses a challenge to government at all levels. If, at certain periods in our history, the states have been slow to meet this challenge, whether from real or fancied inability, thereby opening the way for enlargement of the scope of national powers and functions, we need not conclude that they are doomed as units of government to fade into insignificance. When compared with their own past activities, the states are today much more powerful governmental units than they have ever been. Public services performed by state governments have reached tremendous proportions. Measured in terms of dollars and cents, this expansion is truly amazing. Total state revenues 40 years ago amounted to only \$345 millions and today they exceed \$13 billions. State expenditures have shown a similar increase.

It should also be noted that through national-state cooperation, sometimes referred to as "cooperative federalism" or the "new federalism", many public programs have been made possible, and that the significance of the states has been considerably enhanced by this device. Another form of cooperative action involving the states is found in the development sometimes referred to as "regionalism".

Some make more of regionalism than others, going so far as to predict that the states as we know them may in time give way completely to regional units of broader scope and dimensions. This extreme seems highly doubtful. But in interstate cooperation there is promise of a new day for the states as they seek to fulfill more adequately the demands of the people.

Such devices as national-state and interstate cooperation can be in the future, as they have already been, a great assistance to the states as they strive to thwart the pressures tending toward extreme centralization and the resulting loss of power and significance. These devices alone, however, are not sufficient, for with the passing of time the people will probably continue to demand increased services from government. If their demands are not met by the state and local governments, they will look to the national government for assistance. If the states are hesitant or unwilling to act in attempting to meet this challenge, if they fail in their obligation, then the people will turn to federal authority.

Confronted with this situation, it is necessary that the states set their own houses in order so that they can more effectively initiate and administer programs of public service. State legislatures must be made more representative of and responsible to the people. It is not merely an oversight that some states have had no legislative reapportionment since their present aged constitutions were first adopted. Constitutional revision itself is a very real need in many states. A few states have recognized this and have taken action, but many have not. Then there is administrative reorganization. Much attention has been given to this subject in recent years, and Little Hoover Commissions have sprung up in many states, indicating a growing awareness, however reluctant in some instances, of the need for readjustments in the administrative machinery of the states.

At the local level, considerable improvement has been made in recent years. Local government is a prime responsibility of the states, and the extent to which the states are able to keep local functions in the hands of vigorous, effective local units, will go a long way toward helping them measure up to their own responsibilities and preserve themselves as significant units of government.

Even the county, which for many years has been condemned in most extreme terms, has recently received more friendly, constructive attention; and the progress which has been made in municipal government and administration in many states is well known.

The current community-development movement which finds citizens in both rural and urban communities organizing for action to solve their own community problems is a healthy sign. It should be encouraged by the state and local governments in every way possible, for it indicates a desire of the people to do what they can for themselves, thus relieving the strain of over-centralization.

These, then are a few ways in which the states may live up to their responsibilities and safeguard their place in American government: (1) by regional arrangements for interstate cooperation in carrying on certain functions; (2) by cooperative action with the national government; (3) by keeping their own houses in order through necessary reforms and reorganization; and (4) by fostering strong and

effective local governments in order to make possible a reversal of the trend toward centralization.

It is largely up to the states themselves to determine whether or not they will maintain their position in American government. The people are demanding services, and the states need only to bestir themselves to meet these demands. They can if they will.

In closing, I wish to quote briefly from Professor William Anderson. Discussing the subject, "Federalism - Then and Now" in the magazine, State Government, a few years ago, he wrote in part as follows:

"It is one of the task of political scientist and statesmen for the next generation to work out a constructive and antonomous role for the States in the work of the nation. The right formula has not yet been discovered. The value to the whole nation of preserving the states can hardly be questioned and need not be elaborated. To keep them alive and strong they must be kept active in the performance of functions over which they have their own control. They should not be allowed to die of sheer inactivity, or become mere administrative districts of the National Government.

To prove their value in the future in the face of a powerful national sentiment that has grown impatient with them, the States must show beyond a doubt that they can be effective and economical in their operations. . . . They must demonstrate that they can be quickly responsive to local needs and sensitive to regional as well as national opinion. In short, they must in the face of great odds win back some of that great public favor that they once had, and recreate in their peoples the sense of regional loyalty that the states once represented. This will not be achieved by heated oratory about states rights, or by legalistic attempts to obstruct the nation's actions. What is needed is a deliberate reappraisal and demonstration of the role of the states in the national social order that now exists, and an attempt to re-educate the people in the values of self-government in state and local communities."

## Voltaire and the Human Factor in Government

By

Erwin H. Price<sup>1</sup>

Voltaire, reacting to certain theories of Montesquieu's *Esprit des lois*, once made the statement: "There is no fundamental law."<sup>2</sup> The substance of this observation was repeated several times in other parts of Voltaire's work. We may assume that he made it seriously, that he was giving expression, not to a criticism based on mere personal petulance, but to a reasoned conviction. The purpose of this study is to determine what reasoning lay behind this opinion.

Voltaire often expresses his impatience with metaphysical discourse, preferring to consider, especially political institutions, in the light of real social conditions rather than as darkened by hypothetical assumptions. When Montesquieu remarks: "Before there were any laws made, relationships in justice were possible."<sup>3</sup> Voltaire refuses to discuss the point, referring to it as "The ancient quarrel between the realists and the nominalists."<sup>4</sup> He was similarly disinclined to view the influence of climate as determinative in political development, no doubt because this theory seemed too obviously *a priori* or to savor vaguely of metaphysics.

In his attack on the theory of climatic determinism he made two important objections. He pointed out that the inhabitants of the same area often changed in essential characteristics from century to century in an unchanging climatic environment. Moreover certain periods of history had been uniformly brilliant or uniformly decadent over the entire world. The climate of Rome did not change perceptibly, we read in the *Commentaire sur l'Esprit des lois*, from the days of Romulus and Remus. While in the age of Cato of Utica there were many suicides, in the long period preceding, there was only the poorly authenticated case of Lucretius.<sup>5</sup> Whereas from the tenth to the sixteenth Century, hundreds of petty noblemen disputed the Italian cities with poison and steel, all at once as if by magic the peninsula is filled with great artists of every sort. Two hundred years later Italy was bringing forth charming *cantatrice* and *sonettieri*. "However," writes Voltaire, "The Appenines are still at the same place and the Eridan, which has changed its beautiful name to that of Po, has not changed its course."<sup>6</sup> Why were the Egyptians, magnificent in the reign of Sesostriis, so trifling, frivolous and cowardly in the Eighteenth century? <sup>7</sup> Voltaire considers the climate solution to this problem too facile; his comments suggest more subtle causes.

It is true that Voltaire's method of criticism, no doubt inspired by hostile feelings, unjustly ignores the magnificent eclecticism of Montesquieu by attributing to his thought a narrow didacticism foreign to its spirit. However in the welter of objections and the exaggerations implicit in them, we do find the real opinions

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<sup>2</sup>Price, E. H. "Voltaire and the Fundamental Law", *Romanic Review*, XXVIII (1947) 431 - 442.

<sup>3</sup>*Esprit des lois*, Laboulaye, Liv. I ch. I, p. 91.

<sup>4</sup>*Commentaire sur l'Esprit des lois*, Moland, XXX, p. 407.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 442-443.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 456.

<sup>7</sup>*Dictionnaire philosophique*, Moland, XVIII p. 199.



of Voltaire, not necessarily about Montesquieu's work as an author, but about certain questions raised in that work. The author of the Essai sur les moeurs, critical of climatic determinism in human affairs, likewise rejects the idea that greatness in a people is the result of consciously planned living in accordance with the precepts of a given philosophy. In a passage referring to Emperor Julian's efforts to restore the earlier simplicity of Roman society, Montesquieu writes: "They called forgetfulness of dignity that which was only the memory of the older customs."<sup>8</sup> In the margin of his copy Voltaire has written opposite this line the qualifying adjective "stoic."<sup>9</sup> This adjective becomes the eternal taunt of all his comment on Montesquieu's history of the Romans. The great president elaborates with scant detail the harsh discipline, the severe poverty and the canny persistence by which the Romans built themselves to power. Even for the period before the appearance of Stoicism, the reader has the impression that the Romans were really already inspired by the philosophy of Zeno. Voltaire responds to this contention by describing the early Romans as "brigands," "brutalized thugs" and censuring Montesquieu for glorifying primitive, aboriginal men. He praises unstintingly the later Romans for their modernity and for their contempt of poverty and narrow didacticism. He denies that Stoicism was ever the cult of more than a limited number of the great Romans. "It is certain," he writes "that Cato did everything for duty and for his country and never anything for himself. He is almost the only Roman of his time who deserves that eulogy."<sup>10</sup>

The eagle soars through the clouds, above tree and crag, precisely because he was born to fly. He was created for the empyrean as the empyrean was created for him. Voltaire cannot admit that daily calisthenics would enable a sparrow to excel him. After considering the possible influence of climate on English character in an attempt to rationalize the political successes of England he queries: "Is it not true that in general, the English have in their spirit something firmer, more considered and persistent than some other peoples?"<sup>11</sup> And his reasoning about the greatness of Rome follows exactly the same vein of thought. Stoicism may perhaps account for the wave of suicides in a certain period of Roman history. But Stoicism, like other philosophies, has been different in the minds of different peoples. The fact is a commonplace of experience. Consider the abuse of pragmatism by the Americans especially in their educational practices. A pistol in the hands of a man resolutely wise and tolerant is a useful support of law. In the hands of a child it is a dangerously lethal weapon. The vertu which Montesquieu lauds in the Romans of the republican period, his great critic qualifies as a petty, narrow, impoverishing spirit, a prostitution of Stoic principles, eternally hostile to progress, inimical to modernity. The Romans, as all peoples who have left their mark on history, achieved greatness, regardless of climates or philosophies, through their own inherent merits.

Voltaire was to pursue still farther this important civic quality called vertu. In spite of the author's firm and repeated definition to the contrary, he labors along with many later critics, to attach to the concept as used in the Esprit des lois, the ordinary, accepted meaning of the word virtue as a moral quality. The procedure was distinctly unfair; it narrows and belittles still further the concept. Yet because Voltaire here acts in character by substituting his own thought for that of his great contemporary, we are able at least to evaluate the substituted thought.

<sup>8</sup> Considérations sur la grandeur et décadence des Romains ch. XVII. p. 263.

<sup>9</sup> Marginal Comment of Voltaire in the Lausanne edition of 1750.

<sup>10</sup> Le Triumvirat, Moland, Vol. VI, p. 208 (Note of Voltaire inscribed on third act.)

<sup>11</sup> Dictionnaire philosophique, Moland, Vol. XIX, pp. 294-295.

Montesquieu's definition turns rightly on the derivation of the term virtus from vis which signifies strength or courage and in the Esprit des lois the courageous public spirit of the good citizen. The answer of Voltaire to this reasoning is that "Virture is not the principle of anything." And he devastates the whole field with similar strictures. He will have none of the crainte which inheres in despotism nor of the honneur which motivates monarchy. Disregarding the limiting definitions of Montesquieu, he divests these concepts of all significance finally to term them mere abstractions. He is thus able to accuse Montesquieu by implication of dabbling in metaphysics again. His thought here is obvious. Peoples become great or languish and decay, not because of climate nor the practice of a given philosophy but because of qualities inherent in themselves. Therefore the determining force in forming political institutions is the distinct nature of the people whom they serve. The famous motivating principles are mere metaphysical abstractions which their creator has sought to divorce from all the moral convictions common to mankind. In Voltaire's thinking the human element is the determinant. These principles have no human validity or significance.<sup>12</sup>

The view becomes clearer when the matter of serving human interests is in question. Governments have no other reason for being. Voltaire's passions are always aroused, nearly to the point of fanaticism, by this idea. Condorcet rebuked him severely for preferring the Comte de Chastellux's La Félicité publique to the Esprit des lois. The statement was of course an exaggeration, the injustice all the more gratuitous that Montesquieu had been dead for twenty years when it was made. The complete title of this book, De la félicité publique ou considérations sur le sort de l'homme dans les différentes époques de l'histoire, reveals an emphasis on the human factor which could not fail to intrigue Voltaire. One of the features of this work was a consideration of the economic welfare of the people, of the commodities they might enjoy and of the hours of leisure which might be placed at their disposition.<sup>13</sup> The author further notes the inequalities of wealth among the different peoples and the effect of this situation in world civilization. He suggests the elimination of international hostility and ultimately of wars, by the correction of these inequalities. Indeed, his book is remarkable, appearing in 1772, for a profound study and an appreciation, entirely new in its day, of the customs and institutions of antiquity. It is not out of place to recall here that the Comte de Chastellux served in the American War of Independence and that he was a friend of General Washington. His name appears on a tablet at William and Mary College carrying the names of French officers who served in America.

In a note placed at the end of the book to defend himself against the charge of plagiarism the author confesses knowledge of the work of Muratori, Della pubblica Felicità, but declares a little pompously that the Italian has treated the subject "dogmatically ... while we have limited ourselves to simple observations."<sup>14</sup> This writer has not seen the Italian author's book and can therefore not pass on the case for plagiarism. However Chastellux's alleged procedure is consistent with the Voltairian idea of enlightenment, the simple knowledge of the truth as contrasted with the building of theories. Its greatest appeal to him was undoubtedly that concern for human welfare which was his ruling passion.

<sup>12</sup>Price, E. H., "Voltaire and Montesquieu's Three Principles," in P.M.L.A., LVII(1940), pp. 1046-1052.

<sup>13</sup>Chastellux, De la félicité publique, pp. 12, 16-17.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 216 f.

In politics as elsewhere Voltaire was the implacable foe of what he sometimes calls the esprit de système or the esprit de géométrie. In no place is the fact more obvious than in his reactions to Montesquieu's statements about fundamental law. Most of his strictures are frankly illogical. He points out that there was no fundamental law in Rome because the government changed again and again from the republican form through mob-rule, dictatorship, to monarchy. He repeats the charge regarding other nations of history in the same way, all this in spite of the fact that he unjustly accuses Montesquieu of defining fundamental law as the formative law inhering in the earliest political institutions of a nation. When the author of the Esprit des lois declares that the exercise of the executive authority by a single individual is part of the fundamental law of the despotism Voltaire has a dozen examples of despotisms otherwise ordered. He takes his greatest exceptions to Montesquieu's fundamental law of the French Monarchy. In the system of the Esprit des lois, the celebrated intermediary powers, the nobles of the robe, entrenched in the parlements, participating in legislation through the right of remonstrance, form a balancing check on both king and people and are declared to be the most distinguishing feature of the fundamental law of the French Monarchy. Basing his arguments in part on Dubos, Etablissement de la Monarchie française, Voltaire essays to prove that sovereignty inheres in the people and the monarch. In his Histoire du Parlement de Paris he demonstrates that the legislative functions of the parlements, originally constituted as judiciary bodies, were usurped. Triumphantlly he traces the origin of sovereignty back to the ancient provincial assemblies, the Etats généraux. If there is anything fundamental in the French monarchy, he declares, it is not the parlement, but the Etats généraux, where the rights of the people are voiced.<sup>15</sup>

Governmental institutions cannot be fashioned by metaphysical conceptions, determined by the influence of climate or made to fit the demands of particular philosophical disciplines. In given cases government must respond to, be made relevant to and adapt itself to the nature of the people to be governed. In the contriving of institutions for the control and direction of men the human factor must be paramount. The characteristics, the limitations, the capabilities and the desires of the people governed are the real determinant of political forms. In his discussions of the government of China, in his comment on the Esprit des lois and in many other contexts, Voltaire makes the point crystal clear. Since the people have at all events the right to change and to advance, he will not countenance a theory of fundamental law as a road-block to progress. No mere mechanical system should interrupt the clash of human passions in politics. No preconceived ideas ought to embarrass the free play of the human intellect nor negative in any way the announced will of mankind.

"The climate has some influence," writes the Patriarch of Ferney, "The government has a hundred times more; religion joined with the government, still more."<sup>16</sup> Institutions in other words are highly important, but for a single reason; they are the expression of the intellectual in man. The institution is the fruit of the idea. Ideas are all-powerful for good or evil. For Voltaire ideas are not only big with potentialities; when they are assiduously cultivated their effects may not be avoided. The theory of climatic influence is an effort, albeit an ancient and a crude effort, to account for the varying customs and characteristics

<sup>15</sup>Price, E. H., "Voltaire and the Fundamental Law," Romanic Review, XXXVIII (1947), 431-442.

<sup>16</sup>Dictionnaire philosophique, Moland, Vol. XVIII, p. 199.



of races by the scientific observation of the environment. For the understanding of such minor physical characteristics as color, stature or physiological traits it may have a limited validity. The unexplained moral and intellectual variations cannot be sought in this manner. It is impossible to know all the race migrations from one climate to another, all the intermarriages between races or to make any of the other myriad investigations to prove the theory of climatic determinism. If it were possible, the results would no doubt show the same limited climatic influence already admitted, nothing else. For the most part the theory does not indicate at all the great determining forces which shape the institutions and the life of nations. Modern science is today taking shape in a manner widely at variance with the apparent uniformity and symmetry which astonished and inspired the age of Voltaire and Montesquieu. We must even today side with Voltaire in the opinion that the great determinant of human institutions, perhaps of human survival, is the intellect of man. The same plant can grow and flourish in widely separated geographical areas. Its dominant traits, even many of its minor traits, are inherent in the seed. The greatness of Rome was inherent in the Romans. The intellectual potential of a race is the real determinant of its institutions and that potential is in the race.

Thus we must turn elsewhere for our complete answer, in a direction which Voltaire has impliedly indicated. Governmental institutions are perhaps in some sort the highest expression of the human intellect. They are difficult to build and mere knowledge is not enough for the task. The attempted duplication in human government of a system of equilibrium, of checks and balances, believed observable in the arrangement of the universe, was a wise and admirable procedure, productive in a mechanical way of excellent results. However the supreme test for the system will be: Does it operate for human freedom and welfare? If it does so operate the result will not be so much due to levers and balances as to the genius of the governing mind which is ever and always the eternal fulcrum. In the construction of institutions man looks wisely everywhere in nature for examples and inspiration. He should not overlook the best.

In the Dialogue d'Euhémère Callicrate is reproached by his friend for the abuse of the term nature. "If I told you," says the latter, "that there is no nature, that everything is art in the universe and that art reveals an artisan ... You will admit that you can not understand by this vague word, nature, anything but an assemblage of things which exist and of which the greater part will not exist tomorrow... Your nature is only a word invented to signify the universality of things. In order to make you see at present that art has done everything, just observe an insect, a snail, a fly; you will see there an infinite art which no human industry can duplicate ...."<sup>17</sup> If the spinning of a spider web is an art what is the governing of men? Here is the real determinant. Voltaire has eliminated every other possibility. In the ripeness of his maturity he tells us that the builder of institutions must know men, not only in their natural environment, but in the secret places of their mind. He must be possessed of the touch of genius in the task of governing them.

If the toil of the spider in spinning its web is an art, it is an unconscious art. But the art of the statesman is difficult for he has moral responsibility

<sup>17</sup> Dialogue d'Euhémère, Moland, Vol. XXX, p. 471.



and he has the faculty of choice. He must be above everything else tolerant of all human positions, even of human weakness, with his mind untrammelled by preconceived systems or ideas. Voltaire believed that the great periods of history, few in number, were due to the leadership of effective minds, wise, sagacious and giving expression to the best qualities of their age. These leaders are so rare however that they leave vast lacunae of darkness and sterility between the golden periods of history. Indeed they are so rare that we classify them among the world's immortals, placing them beside the Shakespeares, the Molières, the Racines, with whom they properly belong as great artists. And Voltaire would give free play to the human mind, he says, by denying the existence of the fundamental law. He adds occasionally that there is no fundamental law excepting "the right to be free." His position here, as on so many other occasions when he found it comforting to oppose Montesquieu, is probably extravagant and exaggerated. Nevertheless we might go a great way in politics today if we were more successful in finding the sublime creative mind, conversant with "the art of governing men."

## *Farm Marketing Under Industrialization*

### *A Proposed Research Project on Opportunities for Increased Efficiently in Marketing Channels and Services for Locally-Produced Farm Products to Meet Changes Associated With Industrialization<sup>1</sup>*

by

W. E. Christian, Jr.\*

Low income to the human agent in agriculture has been one of the prime economic problems facing the South for several decades. It has generally been assumed that a policy of industrialization will do much to solve this problem. A process of industrialization in an area could contribute to the solution of the low income problem through two directions.

1. It could provide non-farm job opportunities for people presently employed or partly employed on the farm permitting a reorganization of the farm unit in such manner as to raise the productivity of labor on the farm.
2. It could provide a larger and more favorable market for local farm products than had existed previous to industrialization through increases in both the number of people buying the products and in the incomes in the area, (providing the income elasticity for farm products was positive.)

There are many facets to these two processes and these facets have been studied or are being studied in varying degrees. Considerable research is now in process over the South dealing with the impact of industrialization on the combination of labor and capital on the farm unit. So far as this writer knows, much less effort and resources have been used in studying the second type of process; i.e., the impact of industrial development in an area upon the market outlet for farm products.

It is the objective of this research project to discover the relationship between the pattern of industrialization and urbanization and the market development for agricultural products. With a better understanding of these relationships, more effective policies can be developed which will aid in the solution of the low income problem in agriculture.

The major hypotheses that we propose to test in this study are: (1) that the nature of the demand for farm products and marketing services is influenced by the length of industrialization and the type of employment; (2) that in areas where a large proportion of women are employed, the demand for farm products with people of given incomes will include more marketing services in the way of prepacking, pre-cooking, deliveries, etc.; and (3) that in areas where industrialization is of a recent nature, the people employed in the non-farm jobs may engage in more part-time farming and that the demand of individuals or families under such conditions will be different from that of individuals of similar income who are in older industrial areas and who have moved their residence to the urban centers.

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<sup>1</sup>This project will be carried on jointly by the Department of Home Economics and Agricultural Economics, Mississippi Agricultural Experiment Station.

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In addition, we propose to examine the development of local markets and marketing facilities for locally-produced farm products under the different demand situations. In most cases the consumer demand for food products from the farm include a joint demand for the farm products along with a certain amount of marketing services. Therefore, we propose to test a further hypothesis that the extent to which a higher consumer demand structure resulting from industrialization and urbanization represent a new and more favorable market for local farm products depends on the extent to which the marketing services jointly demanded with the farm products are supplied in the local area.

### Procedure

Since it will be impossible, with the resources available for this project, to study all food products, we propose to limit the study to meat (beef, poultry, and pork), eggs, green leafy vegetables, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, and perhaps fluid milk.

We propose to select for study four areas in the state. Two areas must have undergone industrial development over a relatively long period of time while in two areas industrial development must have been of a recent nature. In each of the two areas, one will be an area where a large proportion of employment is made up of women and the second will be an area where employment of women is very low.

We propose to draw a sample of both rural and urban consumers from each area which is chosen for study. The consumption pattern for these selected products will be studied in detail for a period of one week. That is, the consumption data along with price and quality and source of purchase for the selected products and their main competing food will be obtained in as much detail as possible. Along with these data any changes in the consumption pattern over the past year will be noted. In addition, data on income (both source and amount) will be obtained along with the characteristics of the family as to size, race, education, and employment characteristics. From these data on consumption, we hope to be able to determine: (1) the relation between demand of these selected products and income (we propose to examine this relationship in light of different consumption patterns at different income levels in the same area and the same group of consumers (urban and rural) and between areas and groups.) (2) We hope that this will give some insight into the relationship between the demand patterns for income groups that have been employed in non-agricultural employment over many years and those that have recently shifted from agricultural employment to non-agricultural and those that remain in agricultural employment. (3) The relationship between demand and the source of income; i.e., whether women are employed outside the home or not.

We would hope that the above procedure would indicate the nature of the market for the selected products. It would not indicate whether these markets necessarily mean new and more favorable markets for local producers. Therefore, we propose to carry the study one step further in order to test the hypothesis that the increase in market demand for these selected farm products along with the joint demand for marketing services means a new and more favorable market for local producers of these products.

In this step we propose to sample the retail outlets for the selected products, to obtain the quantity of the products sold in the area for one year, the source of their supply along with changes in the source of supply. We also hope to obtain some index of price for the one-week period in which the consumption data are obtained.

In addition to the data from the retail unit, data of the same nature as above will be obtained from all the wholesale units. Other marketing agencies in the area for each product will be studied similarly.

From the analysis of these data, it is anticipated that we will be able to obtain: (1) the relationship between the demand in the market and the quantity supplied by local producers, (2) the relationship between the price which is paid producers in the area for products sold in the local markets and the price of similar products sold in other areas of production. These relationships should then permit us to test whether the new consumer demand actually is used as a market outlet for local producers and to what extent it is a more or less favorable market than other producing areas enjoy. This latter analysis will not give us the most desirable answer, for what we really need is to determine whether the new market outlet in the urban center offer a more favorable market to local producers than was offered before the new consumer market developed. Something along this line of analysis may be possible by comparing the demand for farm products at the farm level in areas which have been in the process of industrial development different lengths of time. Ideally, we would like to know whether the marketing services supplied for locally-produced products in these areas are being supplied at a relatively lower cost than they were before the new markets resulting from the industrialization and urbanization process began. This, of course, could be done only through some cost studies which we do not propose to do in this project. We do feel that by studying the market in as much detail as we plan to do that we will get some idea as to what has happened to cost of marketing services for locally-produced products.

As we see it, a study of the structure of consumer demand in these areas both for these farm products and marketing services should indicate the basic requirements of the marketing system. A further analysis of the marketing system in the area should point to ways in which the marketing system could be adapted or adjusted to facilitate local producers in taking advantage of the new market outlet for these products (providing, of course, that the first part of the analysis indicates that the industrialization and urbanization process created new market outlets at the consumer level).



## What's the Use of Writing College Histories?

by

John K. Bettersworth<sup>1</sup>

In the historical profession the announcement of the fact that someone is writing a college or university history has usually been received with that same arch of the brow and glance down the nose that very proper ladies reserve for their sisters who have gone astray. Perhaps the college historians deserve their fate, for a glance at the literature of college history suggests that, with certain notable exceptions, most of it would have saved everyone considerable embarrassment had it been quietly and anonymously deposited on a doorstep in the dark of the moon.

Of course, we historians may explain away much of the ill fame associated with college and university histories by pointing out the fact that these often quasi-historical treatises are frequently not begot by historians at all. Rather, the task falls upon some such heirloom as an emeritus professor of Latin who has been doing odd jobs about the campus since the dead languages were funeralized. Or, worse still, the honor of glorifying the alma mater is siezed by an aging alumnus who had accumulated a fortune in trade and can never forget that he once made an A- in English composition and was an assistant sports editor of the college weekly. So he sits down to bequeath to posterity the glory of his undergraduate days in a vast disorganized compendium of fact and legend, including the vital statistics of every sports contest in the history of the institution, together with appropriate pen portraits of all the campus celebrities, except, of course, those personally distasteful to the author. Such works of supererogation might possibly prove to be the stuff of which college histories are made, but they most assuredly are not adequate college histories. In fact, they are all college and no history.

But things are not so bad as all that. In recent years, professional historians have increasingly turned their attention to the field of university, and -- to a lesser degree -- college, history. The result, even if it sometimes lacks the pyrotechnics of the lay histories, is both technically and factually a vast improvement over the efforts of our retired alumnus and retiring professor of Latin. But is even this worth an historian's effort? What is the use of college and university histories, anyway?

Now, to be brutally frank, whatever we historians have to say on the subject, the college and university histories have some very practical uses that will ensure the survival of this historical genre. In fact, to those who lift their hats at the playing of the alma mater, almost any kind of a college history is worth its weight in gold, so long as the name of the owner of the hat appears in print and the sophomore escapades to which he was, or thinks he was, a party, are preserved for posterity. We must remember also that comptrollers and secretaries of alumni associations often employ these college scriptures in promoting missionary work in the dark recesses of the alumni pocketbook. But college histories written for self-congratulatory or promotional purposes often open the doors of the college only to find the people, and such history tends to be very personal, very local, and very tactful. An honest historian must needs consider such practical matters

<sup>1</sup>

John K. Bettersworth's own venture in college history writing, entitled People's College, A History of Mississippi State, will be published in May, 1953, by the University of Alabama Press. The above article is based on a paper read by Professor Bettersworth before the Southern Historical Society and subsequently published in American Heritage III (1949), 44-47. It appears here in slightly revised form.

as the interests of the college administration and the students or alumni; but service to the college might easily become disservice to the profession of writing history.

But college and university history need not be thus. While essentially valueless as an end in themselves, college histories are an important and vital part of our whole historical scene. They are, to be sure, functionally hardly more than a small segment of the background in this scene, - small threads, as it were, woven into the tapestry of general history; but failure to include these details would present an incomplete picture that is all a foreground of men and events that might just as well have belonged to the antipodes or even to another planet as to our own neck of the world. The contribution that our institutions of higher learning have made to the whole of our history is essential to the understanding of most of our great men, except of course the bootstrap variety, and of practically every major event or movement in our national life. Remove, for example, the University of Virginia from the life of Jefferson, and delete all mention of it from the history of Virginia, the South, and the Nation, and we should have an abstraction that might as well be hung upside down, for all the real meaning that it would convey.

College and university history is a component of our intellectual history. We must admit, of course, that the influence of our collegiate training toward the freeing of the American mind has often been negligible. But, good or bad, the American college has done something to shape or misshape the minds of those whose souls it has briefly mothered. In fact, it is historically just as important to know that a student mind departed college in chains as it is to know that the shackles were broken there, - perhaps even more so, for thereby we may discern a factor of causation that explains our faults as a people. Certainly it is worth while to know about a college whether a great man who passed that way was awakened to intellectual maturity or whether its classrooms might be added to that multitude of places where great men slept.

Again, the colleges and universities have played a role, either positive or negative, in nearly every intellectual movement in our history. Sometimes, a movement may have actually begotten a college. Consider the religious element in the founding of our earlier colleges, even in the reputedly godless colonial South, where Virginians nurtured the College of William and Mary because they refused to abide by British instructions to let their souls be damned while they raised tobacco. Recall, too, how the Great Awakening hewed log colleges out of the backwoods and gave us an institution like Princeton. But colleges also beget movements. We shall not soon forget what Harvard did for the elective system, Johns Hopkins for graduate studies, or Columbia Teachers College for the creation of fashions in pedagogy.

But the college is not merely the mother of the soul, it is the mother of the body. By this I do not venture any puns about athletics; rather, I refer to the role that the college plays in the making of what it boastfully speaks of as "the man" - the man who must live, and move, and have his being in our materialistic society. Despite all our beautiful platitudes about the college as a nurturer of the spirit, we might as well admit that even the most confused freshman, when hard-pressed for an explanation of his being on the campus, will tell us that he hopes withal to facilitate his getting ahead in the world. In short, the colleges and universities are largely professional schools, and as such, they are a vital part of the life of the community, the state, and the nation, helping to shape the course of our economic, political, and social development.

Conversely, our economic, political, and social life has deeply affected our higher education; so the exchange works both ways. All of which means that for college and university historians, there can be no such thing as a separation of the affairs of the college and those of the whole life of man. Obviously the American college is the creature of our own free enterprise system, where the money came first and the education afterward. Until our burgeoning middle class merchants and industrialists turned their conspicuous wealth into educational coffers, it was the church that nurtured our higher education. But, when the men of means began to give their money and names to American colleges, the praise of the Lord soon had its counterpart in the praise of the lords of trade. Even when our middle class gave nothing else to the college, it gave its sons and daughters, and these so generously that college education among us has become a big business. It is not surprising that most of what we sometimes contemptuously speak of as "collegiate" dates from that boom and bust era that was the 1920's, when the fortunes of many an American college rose and fell with the fortunes of the boomed or busted business man.

But the American colleges and universities have not been the exclusive precinct of the well-to-do. There has always been a grassroots America, and the voices from the shop and the furrow have demanded and got "industrial" or "agricultural and mechanical" colleges. As a result, the "people's college" has grown these hundred years until we now take it for granted that the progeny of every farmer and mechanic will have a chance at a higher education. In this connection, it might be pointed out that in Mississippi as elsewhere, the people's college scheme was espoused by such farm organizations as the Patrons of Husbandry and the Farmer's Alliance, particularly the former, which was largely responsible for the creation of the A. & M. College for men and the Industrial Institute and College for Women.

So the American institution of higher learning has become an institution of higher living, serving and being served by all the classes, from the man behind the plow to the man beside the ticker tape. Consequently, the history of our colleges and universities is the history of our people. Even the courses of study reflect this close affinity. How else may we explain the highly practical approach our colleges have made to their curricula. It is small wonder that as the professorships of Latin grow fewer, the professorships of Agronomy, Business Administration, Metallurgy and Mechanical Engineering grow more numerous, for our colleges have learned who spreads the butter. It is not surprising that in recent years our hard-pressed endowed institutions have been turning more and more in the direction of the business man for their financial salvation.

I should like to digress for a moment to cite, as proof of my contention that our college histories are deeply rooted in our everyday life, several fragments of the story of the college I am now in the process of chronicling - Mississippi State College, a land-grant school that began as the state A. & M. college. Mothered by the Grange, it had for its first president a Granger who had also been a Confederate Brigadier - Stephen Dill Lee. Lee had married into the Mississippi plantation aristocracy during the Civil War, and after the war had gone broke trying to manage his wife's dowry. This fateful experience made him a Granger; and after a few months in the insurance business, which at that time underwrote many a Confederate Brigadier for his name's sake, Lee entered state politics, becoming a member of the very legislature that established the A. & M. College. As its first president he solidified the ties of the college with the farm and the Grange. When the Grange faltered in the eighties, Lee became a member of the Farmer's Alliance, never for one moment daring to lose the grassroots touch.

Lee's college was made by his times, and so was Lee. He knew the problems of agriculture, because he was himself one who had been tried in the furrow. Both he



and his college attacked these problems courageously. Lee was not so much a Confederate that he condemned everything Northern. In fact, he felt that the South might well take a leaf out of the Northern book, preferably its bank book, for he sought to attract "Yankee" capital to the South. He also sought immigrant Northern farmers for the South. He placed "Yankee" agriculturists in high positions on his faculty; and he espoused the efficiency and labor-saving devices of the Northern farmer. Meanwhile Lee was reading Henry Grady and faithfully catechizing the student body in "New South" doctrine.

Lee also wanted the farmer's daughter to receive a practical education. In its third year, his college became coeducational; and when, several years later, the Grange bludgeoned the legislature into creating an Industrial Institute and College for women, Lee was indeed happy. In fact, he was soon telling the student body of the woman's college that women should receive equal pay with men; and in 1890 Lee tried to insert woman suffrage into the new state constitution.

At first the Mississippi A. & M. College had confined its attention to agriculture; but in the 1890's Lee yielded to popular clamor from the "coast counties" and certain urban centers in the state to establish a mechanical course. One of his first steps in this connection was to hie himself off to the city of Meridian to address a group of "mechanics" regarding the new program.

It is small wonder that the two state industrial colleges survived all efforts to destroy them - and there were many attacks in the late 80's and early 90's. Such men as Lee, and such organizations as the Grange, had planted these "people's colleges" deeply and firmly in the soil.

College and university history, then, has its uses, just as has the study of every phase, however particular and incidental, of our history, even though in so doing we may run the risk of an overspecialization in research that prevents us from seeing the woods for the trees. But the worst college historian with his one tree will make things easier for the man who goes around seeing trees into woods. Certainly the failure to write the history of our colleges and universities would leave incomplete those careful recitals of causes and effects that we historians pompously trot out to impress the uninitiated; for college history, properly explored, both explains and is explained by everything that has happened in our life as a people.

The redoubtable Mr. Dooley once said: "I know history isn't true, Hennessey, because it ain't like what I see every day in Halsted Sthreet. If any one comes along with a history...that'll show me th' people fightin', gettin' dhrunk, makin' love, gettin' married, owin' the grocery man an' bein' without hard-coal, I'll believe [it]...but not before." Undoubtedly our American historians will be more convincing to the Dooleys if they show our people going to, being influenced by, or at least getting thrown out of college. If the colleges are part of our national life, their history is part of our national history. So, after all, the college historian may prove useful as well as ornamental.



# *The Farmhouse of the Mississippi Piney Woods*

## AN EXTRACT<sup>1</sup>

by

DOROTHY DICKINS

### I. INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study. This study describes the results of a survey made in the Mississippi Lower Coastal Area of farm-owner-operator families' preferences, possessions and activities as they relate to housing needs. The survey is part of a cooperative regional project by the Agricultural Experiment Stations in seven Southern states and the Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics of the United States Department of Agriculture.

This particular report includes the 90 families in the regional sample and an additional 71. These 161 farm families were drawn to represent owner-operator families in the Lower Coastal Area, or Lower Piney Woods. This area includes Jasper, Smith, Simpson, Lawrence, Walthall and Wayne Counties and all others south and east of there with the exception of the three Gulf Coast counties.

The objectives of the study were two-fold: (1) to learn the characteristics of farm dwellings in the Lower Coastal Area of the State and (2) to find out the activities and attitudes affecting housing requirements.

Such a study, it was thought, would contribute not only to improvement of designs for new homes, but to the solution of problems incident to remodeling, to the installation of new facilities and equipment, and to better use of facilities which present farm dwellings offer.

These farm families need advice and the people from whom they will get it -- architects, engineers, builders, contractors, lumber dealers and educators -- need to know more than has been known about the kind of houses such farm families need and want.

Scope and Methods. Jones, Pearl River and Simpson Counties were selected for the study by the Institute of Statistics of North Carolina State College to represent the Mississippi Lower Coastal Area. A total of 29 master sample areas in these three counties was drawn. The 337 families residing in the areas were visited during May and June, 1948, by trained interviewers to determine eligibility for study. To be eligible for the study the family must have owned all or part of its farm and operated the farm; and the household had to consist of two or more members, one of whom was a homemaker at least 16 years of age related to the operator or herself the operator.

Homemakers in families found to be eligible were interviewed with the use of the family schedule. There were 163 eligible families and schedules were completed for 161. The schedule used contained questions about the characteristics of the family, of the dwelling unit it occupied, and of the farms well as about household activities and preferences for specified characteristics in a new farm house.

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1. Extracted from Dr. Dickin's study, "Housing of Farm-Owner-Operator Families in the Mississippi Lower Coastal Area," published by the Mississippi Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin 490 (March, 1952).

Characteristics of the Families. This study was limited to owner operator families since owners are directly concerned with the problem of building and remodeling their family dwellings. Then, too, the majority of farm operators in the Lower Coastal Area of the State are owner families, usually white owner families. In the sample of 161 families there were only 10 Negro families.

One hundred and fifty of the 161 families were normal families; that is, had both husband and wife. Fifty-two per cent of the families had two, three, or four members, the remainder had five or more members. Fifty-five per cent of the families had one or more children under 12 years of age; seventy-one per cent had one or more 18 years and under. Only 29 per cent of the families had adult members only. These adult families were mainly older families.

Socioeconomic ratings (or scores obtained by the use of the Short Form of Sewell's Farm Family Socioeconomic Status Scale which bases scores on ownership of certain material possessions, and on social participation of family head and his wife) were used for classifying families. It was thought that such a rating would be more appropriate for classification of families in a study of housing than would current net income.

The 161 families in this study fell into about the same socioeconomic rating patterns as did the 1507 families included in the Southern regional study. Fifty-five per cent of the group had scores of 39-69 and 45 per cent had scores of 70-91. Socioeconomic ratings of these 161 owner-operator families were somewhat higher than ratings by the same scale of owner-operator families included in the Mississippi Delta Cotton sample of the Southern Family Food Consumption project, a study made about the same time as the Southern housing study. Sixty-eight per cent of the Delta Cotton owner-operator families had scores of less than 70. Since socioeconomic ratings of all farm families in the State are being raised, housing data from a group of families with somewhat higher socioeconomic ratings should be especially useful as a basis for development of functional farm house plans.

Source of Family Income. In the area selected for study, farming was by and large a mode of living rather than the method of getting a living. Eighty-two per cent of the 164 families ineligible for the study were ineligible because they did not live on a farm.<sup>2</sup> Of those who were included in the study, that is, lived on a farm, only 17 per cent said they did not have any income besides that from selling farm products.

There was only one important source for this other income reported. This source was from work off the farm. Seventy-one per cent of the 161 families reported income from off-farm work. Other sources mentioned in order of importance were veteran's benefits, money from married children living away from home, public assistance pensions, handicrafts, boarders and roomers, insurance and annuities.

The off-farm work which members in these families had varied between counties as well as between families. In Jones County off-farm work was more often work in town since Laurel, the county seat, is a highly industrialized city and provides much work to rural residents. In Pearl River County, the most important off-farm work reported was in connection with the tung orchards. In Simpson County, saw-milling, stump digging, and trucking drew upon the farming population.

Preferences, possessions, and activities as they relate to housing needs would, of course, depend in part on whether the homemaker worked off the farm. In this study relatively few (7 per cent) did. Persons in the 161 families working off the farm were as follows:

Head only	46%	One other member and head	6%
None	29%	Homemaker only	4%
One other member	9%	All other combinations	6%

2. A farm was defined as a tract of land on which some agricultural activities were carried on, and which consisted of three acres or more of land, or produced during the preceding year products valued at \$450 or more.

Almost two-thirds (59 per cent) of the farms operated by families in the study group were family living farms. By family living farms is meant that the farm products produced for home use were worth more than those produced for sale. More cotton farms than any other type were found among units producing primarily for sale.

## II. DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM HOUSES

A brief description of the houses occupied by the 161 families in the study is given (1) to provide a basis for analyzing the opinions and preferences expressed by homemakers (2) to give the reader a general picture of farm houses in the area of the study (3) to provide information that may prove helpful in house remodeling programs.

Two-thirds of the family dwellings had been built by the occupants. "Built by" means the occupants has had the house built, or had assisted or built it. Homemakers were not questioned concerning work done by family members but from the "community schedule" previously referred to, it was learned that rough carpentry work in connection with home building is ordinarily done by family members. Finished carpentry, cabinet building and chimney building, it was reported, is done by some farm families. Two-thirds of the houses had been built since World War I.

Most of the houses were of frame construction as shown by the following summary:

Painted frame	47%
Unpainted frame	39%
Composition or asbestos siding	7%
Asbestos-cement siding, brick and other	7%

In this study, houses in which the paint was checked or indistinct were classified as unpainted. The large proportion of unpainted frame houses is in part due to high upkeep cost of a painted house in the Lower Coastal Area where there is rainfall about 100 days during the year and where average maximum temperature in the summer months is around 90° and average minimum temperature in winter months about 40°.

One hundred and fifty-seven of the 161 houses had only one story. Two of the 161 houses had a basement or cellar and three an attic. In the Lower Coastal Area ground water and soil conditions are unfavorable to basement construction. For a great part of the year attics are too hot for family living activities unless ventilated or air cooled. These processes are costly.

More families had 5-room houses than any other size. Median size of the house (the size that marks the dividing line between the upper and lower halves of the distribution of houses by size) was also 5 rooms. Six-room units were only slightly less numerous than five-room ones. These two sizes made up 65 per cent of the total. Number of rooms lived in corresponded very closely with number of rooms in the house.

A recognized problem in housing is that of designing houses that will meet the needs of the family in each of its various stages. The need for space is usually greatest at the period when there are teen-age children, for then the number of members is likely to be largest and the activities most varied. In this study 41 per cent of the families with children in the teens had houses with less than one room per person. Only two per cent of the adult families were as crowded. The standard for crowding frequently used is less space than one room per person.

Kinds of Rooms. Homemakers were asked to name the rooms in their houses. Rooms were listed as they reported them. For instance, if the homemaker called a room a "bedroom" which the interviewer regarded as a living room, she was instructed to record the room as a bedroom. Only rooms partitioned off from floor to ceiling were counted. Thus, a dinette separated from the kitchen by a cabinet or a partition that did not reach the ceiling was not listed as a separate room.

Information about the kinds of rooms in the houses by family size is given in Table I. As will be noted, the main difference in kinds of rooms in houses of smaller and larger families was that larger families had more rooms which they reported as bedrooms, fewer as living and dining rooms, than did smaller families. Breakfast rooms were reported only by families also reporting dining rooms.

TABLE I. Percentage of families having specified kinds of rooms classified by family size.

Kinds of Rooms	Family Size		
	2-4	5 members	All
	members	& over	families
	Per Cent	Per Cent	Per Cent
Kitchen	100	100	100
Living Room	66	58	62
Dining Room	75	69	71
Breakfast Room	4	3	4
Bedrooms:			
1 bedroom	4	4	4
2 bedrooms	46	24	35
3 bedrooms	42	51	47
4 bedrooms and over	8	21	14
Halls	10	8	9
Other rooms <sup>3</sup>	4	1	3
Number Families	83	78	161
Median socioeconomic score of families	68	67	68
Average size of house (No. rooms)	5.2	5.4	5.3

A big hall through the center of the house serving as a family summer sitting room is a traditional style of many of the older homes of the State. In this study such a room was relatively unimportant.

In the study concerned with house design, the proportion of families having various kinds of rooms is important, but even more important is the combination of rooms families actually made. Shown below are the most common combinations of rooms for houses of specified size:

	Percentage of families having
4-ROOM HOUSE	
3 bedrooms, kitchen	38
2 bedrooms, living room, kitchen	31
2 bedrooms, dining room, kitchen	28
5-ROOM HOUSE	
2 bedrooms, living room, dining room, kitchen	54
3 bedrooms, dining room, kitchen	31
3 bedrooms, living room, kitchen	28
6-ROOM HOUSE	
3 bedrooms, living room, dining room, kitchen	77
4 bedrooms, dining room, kitchen	19
7-ROOM HOUSE	
4 bedrooms, living room, dining room, kitchen	90

3. Two dens and two utility rooms.



As size of house increased, more families had both dining room and living rooms. Only one per cent of the families with 4-room houses made the combination of one bedroom, living room, dining room and kitchen. But as will be noted, 54 per cent in 5-room houses, 77 per cent in 6-room houses and 90 per cent in 7-room houses had both living and dining rooms.

Houses of larger families less often had both a living room and a dining room. (Fifty-four per cent of the smaller families and 44 per cent of the larger families had both). But when families in both groups had one of these rooms, they more frequently had a dining room than a living room.

Perches. Perches were most important in this Lower Coastal Area. Ninety-two per cent of the families had one or more. Perches were defined as areas with both a floor and a roof. Steeps or platforms that served mainly as entrances were not regarded as perches. Glassed-in perches were regarded as rooms, not perches. Perches in this study were either open or screened.

Questions concerning whether the porch was screened or open were not included in the schedule of this study. But the majority of the interviewers wrote in this information on the schedules they filled out. From these, it would seem that most of the perches were open, especially the front perches. Many of the back perches, however, were reported as screened.

The front perch was by and large the most important type of perch. Eighty-nine per cent of the family dwellings had front perches, 55 per cent back perches and 4 per cent side perches. Two-perch houses (usually front and back perch) were most common. Fifty-five per cent of the families had two-perch houses, 36 per cent one-perch houses, and one per cent three-perch houses.

Storage Facilities. Thirty per cent of the houses of families in this study had none of the storage facilities listed below. The percentage of families having these facilities was as follows:

Clothes closets	57%	Store rooms	8%
1 closet	26%	Pantries	29%
2 or more closets	31%	Attics	2%
Other closets	10%	Basements	1%

One clothes closet (called a "locker" by many families in the area) for each bedroom is usually considered a minimum desirable standard for space for clothing storage. One-fifth of the houses of families in this study met this standard. Although it might be expected that the newer houses would be better planned with respect to storage than the older, this was not the case. The older houses had clothes closets as frequently as the new ones, and more of them had "store rooms." The store room was often a room originally used as a bedroom but not needed for that purpose by the family occupying the house.

Homemakers were asked during the interview how they used the rooms, halls, and perches they had. A list of possible uses for each of these areas was attached to the schedules to aid interviewers in questioning. This list, except for halls, did not specify storage, but storage was often mentioned when homemakers were asked about "any other uses." Most homemakers stated that they used the back perch to hang work coats and hats. Many reported the back perch as a place to store weed. Storage was rarely mentioned in connection with the front perch.

### III. HOUSING PREFERENCES AND OPINIONS

Outside Area, Style, Stories. There were only a few questions in the schedule related to the outside area. One concerned the entrance of the house desired for callers. Complaints from many farm homemakers had been heard of callers entering the house from the back, and it seemed desirable to get information on this point.

Eighty-six per cent of the 161 homemakers interviewed said they wanted callers to enter the front door into a living room or front hall. Only two homemakers were

satisfied to have them come in through the back door, through the kitchen. The remaining usually mentioned a side porch leading into a living room. The women preferred, however, that members of the family coming from town or church enter the back door, as evidenced by their reply as to the best place for a closet to hang coats worn to town or church. The majority of them replied: "Near the back door."

Most homemakers did not think it essential for the front door to open into a hall or vestibule. This opinion can probably be explained by the mild climate, and the fact that the front entrance would be used mostly for company. Furthermore, and perhaps more important, houses in the area usually do not have entrance halls.

When asked about the view desired from the kitchen window, another question relating to the outside area, the majority of women mentioned something in connection with the farm such as farm buildings, farm road, crops. It may be that since many of their husbands had gainful work away from home that they had more than usual responsibility in keeping in touch with the farm activities. On the other hand, most farmers' wives play an important part in operation of the farm when their husbands are engaged full time in farming.

Two questions were included concerning style of the house: (1) Is there any particular style of architecture that you would choose if you were building a new house; if so what? (2) What do you think of the modern style of house with flat roof? Only 41 women named and described the style of architecture they would choose if building a new house. Twenty-nine said bungalow, 6 ranch, 2 Cape Cod, 2 modern, 1 Spanish and 1 Colonial. It seems significant that the style characterized by a wide veranda should have been mentioned as often.

When homemakers were asked to express an opinion of a style with a flat roof, they were much more verbal. About two-thirds expressed an unfavorable opinion. Comments made by the women were often written on the schedule and included "Too low and hot," "Much too hot."

The popularity of the one-story house has already been indicated. Only 4 of the families had houses of more than one story. Only 11 (or 7 per cent) of the homemakers stated that if they were building a house and could plan it as they wanted it they would have two-story houses.

Windows. Homemakers were asked about the desirability of a window over the kitchen sink and of low windows in the living room so the children can look out. All except three women stated they would not build a house without a window over the kitchen sink.

Sixty-one per cent of the women with one or more children under 9 years of age said they would consider some low windows in the living room a necessary feature of new houses. Although families of other types were not quite so conscious of a need for this feature, 40 per cent of the adult families and of families with older children said they would want to include low windows if they were building. Low windows make it possible for the young child to look out without climbing up or being lifted.

Rooms. The homemakers were not asked how many rooms they would want in a new house. It was assumed that the size of house a family selected for building would be determined largely by the number of people to be housed and the amount the family could invest in a house.

Facts about the houses occupied by the 161 families give some indication of the sizes of houses in which they were most interested. As previously stated, two-thirds of the families lived in 5 or 6 room houses. There was a slight trend for houses built before 1940 to be somewhat larger than those built since 1940. Thirty-three per cent of these built since 1940 had 6 or more rooms, while of those built before 1940, 41 per cent had 6 or more rooms. Possibly increasing building costs as well as decreasing family size are factors in this trend.

Since plans for small houses are likely to be in demand, it seemed worthwhile

to consider what room combination may make the most satisfactory small-house arrangements. Every homemaker interviewed was asked: If a family of father, mother, and two boys and a girl of school age were planning to build a four-room house, what rooms do you think would be best for them? Two-thirds of the women replied: "Kitchen and three bedrooms."

When asked: Now, if this same family of five were planning a five-room house, what rooms do you think would be best for them? Seventy per cent replied: "Three bedrooms, kitchen and living room." It is interesting to note that the homemakers did not give the dining room for this imaginary family the importance that it seemed to be given in their own house plans.

As a further indication of the relative value placed upon different rooms in the small house, each homemaker living in a house of four rooms or less was asked what room she would add first, and what room second, if her house were to be enlarged. An additional bedroom seemed most important. Next in importance was a living room.

**Perches.** The opinions expressed by the families interviewed show that perches should continue to be an important feature of farm houses in the area studied. The climate of the Lower Coastal Area makes perches desirable areas for both work and recreation. The temperature is such that perches may be used most of the year. Glassed-in or enclosed perches are not wanted, except by a few women in the higher socioeconomic group who want a glassed-in side perch.

When homemakers were asked to imagine they were planning to build a new house and could have it as they wanted it, practically all said they would have both back and front porch. Of those saying they would have a front porch, 58 per cent said screened; 36 per cent open; and 6 per cent glassed-in or enclosed. Of those saying they would have a back porch, 90 per cent said screened; 5 per cent open and 5 per cent glassed-in or enclosed. Of those saying they would have a side porch, 41 per cent said screened; 15 per cent open; and 44 per cent glassed-in or enclosed. Family activities that took place on these perches are to be discussed in another section of the report.

**Storage Facilities.** Homemakers in this study were not asked about the kind and amount of storage space desired since it was assumed that storage facilities should be based on kinds and amounts of possessions to store. Amounts of possessions which families of this study had to store have been classified at two planning levels and have been mimeographed. These may be obtained from the Home Economics Department of the Mississippi Agricultural Experiment Station.

In the General Housing Preference Section, as well as in other sections of the schedule, there were several questions that led homemakers to express preferences and opinions concerning storage. At the end of the General Housing Preference Section was one question that provoked many comments on storage facilities. It was: Now can you think of any other features that are so important to you that you wouldn't like to build a house without them? Seventy-one per cent of the 167 comments pertained to storage facilities.

As has been previously stated only two of the 161 houses had cellars or basements. Yet, one-sixth of the women interviewed stated that they thought a basement so necessary they wouldn't want to build without one, and about this same percentage stated that the basement was the best place to store canned food. No doubt the women were thinking of some cool place in the house to store their food. The most common place for storing canned food was in an area not in the house ("smoke house," "bank," "crib," "fruit house").<sup>4</sup> It was interesting to note, however, that only about 10 per cent thought this the best place. Sixty per cent thought a pantry in the house and 18 per cent a cellar or basement was the best place to store such food. No doubt the pantry would have to be ventilated to meet the satisfaction of the majority.

In the question, would or wouldn't you want perches on the house and what would you use them for, homemakers mentioned family activities rather than storage.

4. Smokehouse - a place for curing meats, also used for food storage. Bank - a pit dug in the side of a dirt hill for vegetable storage. Crib - an outbuilding used for storage, generally feed, but occasionally for foods. Fruit house - an outbuilding used for food storage, may store canned or dried foods - usually no meat if designated by this term.



# *Farm and Home Radio Education*

by

Herman J. Putnam and Others

## AN ABSTRACT<sup>1</sup>

### I. THE SURVEY

Even before World War II, radio had become an important educational and recreational influence throughout the United States. The Pontotoc County study, made in this Mississippi county in 1947, showed that 64 per cent of the white people who lived in the open country had radios. With a rapid extension of electric lines into farm areas and with an abundant supply of radios on the market, the number of radios in farm homes continued to increase rapidly. Several county and home agents began to use their local broadcasting stations in extension work soon after the close of the war. The results of these efforts were generally quite satisfactory.

Feeling that the Agricultural Extension Service should and could use radio as a teaching medium to a far greater extent, the Agricultural Extension Information Department, in cooperation with Radio Station WSSO of Starkville, introduced the State College Farm and Home Radio Program in March, 1949. This program was put on twice a week for 15 minutes. The work with WSSO was a testing ground for the far more extensive program that was visualized. The program was carried over this one station until fall of 1949.

Following completion of the State College radio broadcasting station in late summer of 1949, the State College Farm and Home Radio Program began a Monday through Friday 15 minute program. It was begun in September and was carried over nine stations scattered throughout the state. In about 2 months 14 stations were carrying it -- including two of the strongest stations in Mississippi. The extension editor was in complete charge of producing the program. A script writer was employed by the Extension Service to assist with production.

From the beginning, state extension employees have had four days a week of this time, while research and others who work with farm people have had one day. The time on all programs is divided about equally between subjects of interest to men and women. The extension editor has served as master of ceremonies, with a guest and the home editor sharing the time about equally.

The programs are tape-recorded each Saturday morning from previously prepared scripts. Recordings are duplicated in the college studio and mailed to local stations over the state where they are aired at the hour chosen by the local station managers. This hour ranges from 6 a.m. to late p.m. The program is sponsored on some of the stations, but is carried as a public service over others. Tapes are returned to the college studio where they are filed for future re-use as needed.

Extension and other trained persons in agriculture and home economics furnish most of the information for these broadcasts. They prepare the general information for the script writer who writes the scripts and also interviews the women guests. Some information is taken from U.S.D.A. reports. At present, the state P.M.A. office gives the guest part once each month. From one station in the beginning in 1949, the State College Farm and Home Program has expanded to cover about 80 per cent of the state. It is now being carried regularly by 24 stations located in all sections of Mississippi.

The time given at the college to the entire Farm and Home Radio Program by specialists, the script writer, the extension editor, secretaries, and the radio

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Abstracted from "Farm and Home Education Through Radio," a publication of the Mississippi Agricultural Extension Service at State College. The study was conducted under the leadership of H. J. Putnam, leader in field studies and training.



studio personnel amounts to approximately 2 man-years. This does not include the time given by various other people representing other agricultural agencies. In addition to the cost of personnel, there is considerable expense in the purchase of tape, depreciation and maintenance of studio equipment. Then, there is additional expense in operating the many local stations while they are carrying the college program.

It is obvious, therefore, that if the college is to continue to conduct the Farm and Home Program, proof is needed that the effort, in both time and money, is producing results in terms of improved farm and home operation on the farms of Mississippi. Therefore, the extension studies committee decided, upon request by the extension editor, that a study would be made to determine the general effectiveness of the State College Farm and Home Radio Program.

#### What We Wanted to Find Out.

It was decided that the effectiveness of the radio program could be measured in terms of:

1. The number of people, particularly farm people, who listen to the program.
2. The number of people who applied ideas discussed on these programs in their own homes or on their farms.
3. The rating of radio as a method of contacting rural people as compared to other methods used by extension agents.
4. Who listened to the program -- that is, the age, race, sex, and educational level of the listeners.
5. The rating of the college program as compared to other programs developed by county and home agents and carried by the same stations that carry the college program.

Other information wanted was: (1) the number of rural homes with radios; (2) the hour most desirable to farm people for listening to farm and home programs; and, (3) the hours when radios are turned on in rural homes.

Clearly, some of this information would be useful in evaluating the present program as an educational influence, while other parts of it could be used in an effort to improve the radio programs.

#### How The Survey Was Made.

The radio program is an activity of the Information Department. The responsibility for developing the study plan and procedure and for tabulating the data and writing the report was assumed by H. J. Putnam, leader, extension studies and training, and chairman of the extension studies committee. He was assisted in this assignment by the extension editor, Duane Rosenkrans; Mel Alpern, manager of the State College radio station; and Dorris Rivers, assistant rural sociologist.

The counties studied were selected from a list of those counties in which the college radio program was carried during 1951. The counties included are Attala, Coahoma, Oktibbeha, and Pearl River.

Factors considered in this selection were: (1) geographic location; (2) type of farming being practiced in the county; (3) composition of the population as to race, occupation, etc.; (4) whether the county and home agents were putting on a farm and home program in their county in addition to the State College program; and, (5) the willingness of the county extension workers to cooperate with the study to the extent of taking some or all of the schedules in their county.

All families living outside the incorporated towns in these four counties were included in the population to be studied. A random sample of geographic areas, each including about eight families, was drawn from these counties to provide a total sample of one family in fifty. The selection of the areas and the preparation of the area maps were under the direction of Earl Houseman, statistical analyst of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics in Washington, D.C.

The number of areas in each county varied according to the population of the county and ranged from 6 in Pearl River to 17 in Coahoma. A schedule was taken on the man or woman, and on both if they were both at home at the time of the interview. Schedules were taken by county extension agents under uniform instructions and interpretations prepared by Mr. Putnam for the use of interviewers. All families living within the boundaries of the sample areas were interviewed, except in a few instances where contacts could not be made.

A total of 349 records were taken. Of the persons interviewed, 274 considered themselves to be farmers, while 55 said they were not farmers even though they did live in farming neighborhoods. The sample included 171 white persons and 178 negroes.

#### Location and Description of Counties Studied.

Attala County is in the geographic center of Mississippi. It is well divided between the brown loam and clay hills soil areas. Farms are small and are operated largely as one and two family units. Cotton, dairying, and timber are the major sources of cash farm income. The population is about 2/5 negro and 3/5 white.

Coahoma County is a typical Mississippi delta county. It is located in the northwest part of the state and has the Mississippi River as its western boundary. Farm operation is largely in multiple family units. Cotton is by far the leading cash crop with soybeans, oats, and beef cattle as secondary cash enterprises. Hand, negro labor has been replaced to a large degree by tractors and other mechanical equipment. The population is about 1/5 white and 4/5 negro, with a concentration of negro share croppers.

Oktibbeha is the county in which Mississippi State College is located and lies in the northeast part of the state. The west 1/2 of the county lies in the clay hills soil area, while the east 1/2 is in the northeast prairie and flat woods sections. There are some large multiple family units, largely in the prairie belt, but one and two family units predominate in number. A dairy-pasture-hay system of farming is most common. The population is about 2/5 white and 3/5 negro.

Pearl River County is in the extreme south central part of the state and borders Louisiana on the south. The population is rather sparse in areas and is largely white -- 4/5 and 1/5 negro. Production of milk for fluid consumption in New Orleans is the chief cash farm enterprise. Sheep and timber are other cash sources. Some horticultural crops are grown on a commercial scale. There are few large farms.

A study of the sample counties as a whole and of the individuals interviewed indicates that the data secured reflect a reasonably accurate picture of the entire state regarding the factors analyzed.

## II. WHAT WAS LEARNED

### Radios in Home.

A higher percentage (92) of the non-farm white group had radios than did any other group. The lowest percentage (69) with radios was in the negro farm group. A considerably larger number of the white people (91 per cent) had radios than did negroes (70 per cent). There was little difference between farm and non-farm people as to radio ownership.

### Educational Level.

Nine out of 10 of the people who did not have radios did not go higher in school than the eighth grade. Only 6 out of 10 of the people who had radios failed to go higher in school than the eighth grade. The educational level of the entire group with radios was considerably higher than it was for the group without radios. This condition is as was expected.

The most probable explanation for people not owning a radio is that they have inadequate cash income. Generally speaking, a relatively low cash income is associated with poor education. The data on educational level are substantially the same as those reported by the United States Bureau of Census for people in Mississippi over 25 years of age.

### Who Listened to College and Local Radio Programs?

One out of each two people interviewed listened to the college radio program, more or less. Three out of four said they listened to either the college program or to the program put on by their local county and home agents. These local programs were put on only in Attala and Pearl River counties. Fifty-three per cent of the men and 44 per cent of the women said they listened to the college program. Eighty-five per cent of the men and 72 per cent of the women said they listened to either the local or the college program at least once a month.

### Contacts With Extension Service.

According to the survey, the Agricultural Extension Service contacts more people in these counties by radio, over either the college or the local programs, than it does by any other or all other means combined. About 3/4 of the people who had radios said they listened to one of these programs, while of this same group only about 1/3 had any contact with the Extension Service other than by radios.

It appears that the newspaper is the next most effective means of reaching rural people. 4-H Club work, tours, meetings, farm visits, office calls, and home demonstration club work are all effective methods of reaching farm people. However, the data show that at present the radio is probably the most effective method of contact, particularly in terms of time and money requirements. It should be remembered, however, that a contact does not necessarily mean converting the person contacted to a new practice. A contact is essential to a conversion, but the conversion does not always follow.

The following table shows the degree of contact with Extension Agents by those (a) with radios, and (b) without radios:\*

Nature of Contact	With Radios		Without Radios	
	No.	%	No.	%
Number records	279		51*	
No contact	88	32	37	73
Some contact (not including radio)	191	68	14	27
Read agent's column or other extension news items in paper	117	42	8	16
Received a bulletin or circular letter from the college or county extension office	108	39	3	6
Been to the agent's office	97	35	4	8
One of agents visited farm or home	82	29	0	0
Had a child in 4-H work	66	24	8	16
Attended an extension meeting or tour	59	21	3	6
Been a member of a home demonstration club	45	16	3	6
Other	16	6	1	2

\*19 respondents did not report contact with Extension agents.

### College Compared With Local Programs.

The question arises in connection with the use of radio as an educational facility: Is it more effective to promote state-wide programs from State College or for county extension agents to develop their own programs for production over stations within the counties?

In an effort to secure information that might serve as a basis for deciding this question, several questions were included in the survey having to do with appeal of the two types of programs. Only Attala and Pearl River counties had a local program during 1951, so that the data on this question were taken from these two counties only. Both of the county programs had a great many more listeners than did the college program.

In Pearl River County the home agent, in cooperation with a woman on the radio station staff, arranged for one program each month to be put on by members of a community home demonstration club. The station announcers made frequent announcements of all agricultural meetings, tours, and other events -- both 4-H and adult. The county agents put on regular farm programs in which they discussed information of wide interest to the county people. For these and other reasons, a great many farm people in that county tuned in their local station to learn what was going on in the county, as well as to get information that was timely and applicable to them.

In Attala County the county agent and leading farm and business men early in the year mapped out a plan for getting useful information into the hands of families in that county. Cotton being an important crop in the county and the boll weevil never having been effectively controlled, special consideration was given to the problem of boll weevil control. As a result of this plan, the county agent in his regular radio program frequently gave the latest information on boll weevil control. He supplied information to the station announcers who used it on spot announcements several times a week, and even more than once daily during the critical periods in cotton growth. Much other local news and useful information were disseminated over the local station by the Attala County extension agents.

The college program was also carried in both of these counties regularly 5 days a week. The local programs conducted in Attala and Pearl River counties have a much greater listener appeal than does the more general state-wide program originating from State College -- at least the survey so indicates.

The people who listened to the college program differed only slightly from those who listened to the local programs, that is, as to educational level and age. The local programs were rated somewhat higher than was the college program by men. However, the women showed little difference in their rating of the two programs. Perhaps home economic information for women is more universally applicable than is agricultural information for men. This may be the explanation for the difference in the ratings given the programs by men and women. All but a few men and women rated both programs, college and local, either very helpful or helpful.

#### Who Remembered Subject Discussed and Applied New Practices?

The final test of any educational program or method is the extent to which it brings about the desired change in the lives of those for whom it is intended. Therefore, information was secured as to the number of radio listeners who remembered at least one subject that was discussed over the college radio program during the six months prior to the interview. Information was also obtained as to the number of listeners who said they had applied at least one practice that was discussed during the past six months.

Four out of five listeners remembered one or more subjects. A large number remembered several subjects. One-half of the listeners said they had applied at least one new practice in their homes or on their farms.

#### Hours Preferred for Farm and Home Radio Program.

The hour preferred by most of the people interviewed is the noon hour, 12:00 to 1:00. Other popular hours are 6 a.m. and 7 p.m. The low power of many small stations and the competition from network programs probably rule out the 7 p.m. hour for farm and home programs. However, the 6 a.m. hour is probably the next most preferable to the noon hour.

These preferences are supported by the hours when the radio was turned on during the previous day. The peaks tend to coincide. They are around 7 a.m., noon, and 6 p.m. Naturally, there is some difference as to the hour preferred by men and women, but the noon hour is preferable to both men and women.



## *Report of Social Science Group on General Education*

The Second Work Conference on General Education held at Mississippi State College from August 3-6, 1952, grew out of the 19th Conference at the University of Mississippi. Recognizing that the 1951 Conference had necessarily been concerned with the broader problems of general education, the planners of the 1952 meeting decided that an attempt should be made in some way to achieve a closer correlation between theory and practice. "General Education in Action" was chosen as the theme of the 1952 Conference. Four outstanding consultants, one each in the fields of communications, humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences, were brought in to teach selected materials in their areas with the delegates to the Conference acting as students.

The work of the social science group began with a demonstration conducted by the consultant. Dr. Warner used the discussion method, initiating the discussion with the question: "Should or can the social sciences be taught as guides to life?" During the remainder of the week the general discussions were conducted by the co-chairmen, Dr. J. K. Bettersworth and Dr. Joseph James. Miss Furnell Wilson was recorder.

mimeographed copies of the article The Integrated Course in The Social Sciences prepared by Dr. Robert A. Warner were distributed to the members of the group. Among other valuable information the article contains the account of a study of the offerings of fifty-nine colleges and universities of the south and criteria for the integrated course in the social sciences. Any interested person may secure a copy of this paper by writing to Doctor Warner.

### *Some Points Brought Out in the Discussions*

The following points are not necessarily agreements or conclusions:

1. The present emphasis upon general education is an attempt to revitalize the values of a liberal education;
2. The courses in general education in the social sciences should be the result of cooperative planning on the part of the faculty members of all departments of the social sciences;
3. Mere reorganization of the content of existing courses in the social sciences will not result in courses which will accomplish the aims of general education. Any approach must fit the situation existing in a given institution;
4. Problems selected for study should be related to the experiences and needs of the students. There should be consideration given to articulation with the work students have done in the secondary school.
5. Method as well as selection of content should be based on the aims and philosophy of education.
6. The handling of values is the most important issue in the teaching of the social sciences. There are some values upon which we can agree. Some values are almost absolute.
7. The problems approach is methodology. The value of the problems approach for the teaching of history may be questioned. Problems should be challenging and should be approached with genuine emotion by the student.
8. The activities on the part of the student could include the planning of the course, listing problems, participating in discussion groups, visiting community agencies, giving oral reports, reading, taking tests, and undertaking special projects.
9. In courses in the social sciences the student should be provided with material showing both sides of controversial questions. These controversial or "open-ended" questions should be taught so as to encourage the student to evaluate critically all evidence; he should know that there are no ready-made answers. The instructor can influence but should not control opinion; the student should leave a course with convictions, but they should not be given to him by the instructor.
10. There should be emphasis upon the formulation of principles and upon theoretical considerations whenever possible.

### *Action Taken*

It was unanimously agreed that the members of this study group together with representatives from the Mississippi colleges not represented constitute a continuing committee for the study of the problems of general education in the social sciences. Dr. J. K. Bettersworth, Dr. J. B. James, and Dean Furnell Wilson were elected to serve as a central committee for the purpose of acting as a clearing house for the exchange of reports of progress until the next conference.

### *Summary and Recommendations*

A committee composed of Miss Emma R. Corban, S. W. Higginbotham, Mrs. L. O. Todd, and Miss Furnell Wilson formulated the summary and recommendations which were accepted by the group.

One of the primary objectives of education in the United States has been the development of a competent citizenship. This continuing aim is of even greater significance in the troubled era in which we live. Never before have our people been called upon to evaluate and to act upon more complex questions on the personal, community, national, and international levels. A comprehension of the background of such problems and of the principles and approaches developed by the social sciences for their solution is a basic essential of good citizenship.

The chief aim of general education in the social sciences is to contribute to the development of an intelligent and responsible citizenship competent to act upon these vital problems. It is the consensus of this group that a basic program in the social sciences such as is outlined in the following recommendations should be required of all college students; that such a program should continually lay stress upon the changing needs of the citizen in everyday life; and that the teachers in the social sciences should orient their existing courses to conform to this aim and thus make the social sciences a vital experience for the student in his development as a citizen.

#### Recommendations

I. We recommend that each institution establish a program of general education in the social sciences in accordance with the following:

- A. That in the freshman year all students be required to take a course of approximately six semester hours in the background of contemporary civilization. This course is to be oriented to emphasize the inter-relations of American and world civilization and the objectives of general education in the social sciences.
- B. That in the sophomore year all students except social science majors be required to take a co-operatively planned sequence of courses of approximately three semester hours each in sociology, economics, and political science. Any student desiring to do so may substitute the usual basic course in any one of these fields for the three-hour sequence course in that field.
- C. That institutions desiring to develop an integrated course of from six to nine semester hours including the above-mentioned fields (and such related fields as psychology and geography if desired) should be encouraged to experiment with such a course.
- D. That the faculty in the various fields of the social sciences in each institution work co-operatively to emphasize the objectives of general education in existing courses and to develop the above program.

II. We recommend that the above program be presented to the faculty of each institution as soon as possible with a view to its early implementation.

III. We recommend that the 1953 meeting for the social science group be a workshop presenting in entirety the methodology of teaching and the content of the courses agreed upon at this conference. Preferably, the leaders of the workshop should be members of the social science faculties of the Mississippi institutions which have developed such a program. If qualified personnel are unavailable within the state, an outside authority should be secured.

IV. We recommend that the Mississippi Association of Colleges in its future planning on general education consider the desirability of extending the program to the negro institutions of higher learning in the state.

## EARLY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF MISSISSIPPI: 1699-1840

### III. Economic Fluctuations and Business Cycles

by

Robert C. Weems

#### I. THE ECONOMIC STRUCTURE

During the provincial period, the Mississippi Economy was conditioned by each of the ruling colonial powers: France, England, and Spain. It was a time during which the inhabitants, most of whom lived in the Natchez district, slowly, painstakingly, and sometimes frugally acquired modest holdings of lands and slaves. The early territorial and state economy borrowed heavily from the provincial period. Modest holdings of lands and slaves grew into large-scale holdings, and with large landholdings came also a conservatism inherited from the past. The later economy of Mississippi was dominated by the immigrant backwoodsmen, who owned nothing but hoped to become wealthy by making the most of the political power of the common man in a new democracy. The manner in which each of these developments affected the economy and the total picture of economic developments as evidenced by business fluctuations is the subject of the present chapter.

#### The Colonial Economic Structure, 1699-1798.

The influence of the early French colonial economy was mostly indirect; for after the discouragement of the Natchez massacre of 1729, the French never returned in large numbers to the area later included in the Mississippi Territory. The few French influences which did carry through into the territory and state proved to be of secondary importance in the daily conduct of the people; nevertheless some of them were very real and very lasting. One of the influences which appears to have been quite durable was the affinity of many later Natchez citizens for things French. This cultural tie was based upon very practical considerations. Natchez citizens found that an understanding of French language, customs, and legal terminology was of great assistance in the administration of the plantations which they owned in Louisiana, directly across the Mississippi River. It was also helpful in business contacts in New Orleans, where most of the cotton produced in Mississippi was sold. The people of the Natchez country seem to have acquired also some of the restlessness of the early French colonial population. Long after Mississippi had become wholeheartedly devoted to agriculture there existed in the Natchez country a spirit of adventure, promotion, and speculation.

Some of this feeling may be related to the conflict which prevailed in Louisiana throughout the French period. There were strong advocates of agricultural pursuits as the principal means of making a livelihood, and there were equally strong opponents. On the side of agriculture were the gradually accumulating lessons of experience and the sober judgment of Iberville and Bienville.<sup>1</sup> Unwilling to accept this concept were those individuals whose only purpose in coming to the New World was to find quick wealth through discoveries of valuable minerals.<sup>2</sup> Their point of view was reenforced by a sympathetic feeling on the part of the people of the mother country, who also wanted more immediate financial returns than agriculture could provide.<sup>3</sup> The fact that so many of the decisions regarding the colonies were made

<sup>1</sup> Rowland, *History of Mississippi*, I, 151.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 176-77.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 189.



in France placed the non-agricultural group in a preferred position. It was they who in many cases influenced the appointments of governing officials, many of whom were incompetent and inefficient.<sup>4</sup> Naturally, the local acceptance of agriculture came about very reluctantly and without a complete defeat of the group which represented the restless speculative urge to engage in trade, discovery, travel and invention. While the triumph of agriculture was nearly complete under the Western Company in 1728, the end of that concern's Louisiana activities in 1732 saw large numbers of the people returning to non-agriculture pursuits, most particularly to the previously mentioned contraband trade with the Spanish.<sup>5</sup> When a great burst of speculative activities took place in this type of trade about 1748, the French officials began to realize how much agriculture had been neglected and they attempted to reestablish it, but they were too late. When the colony was transferred to the British and Spanish in 1763, it was suffering greatly from the lack of any sound and permanent industry or solidified social and economic structure. Although agriculture, trade, and industry had made great progress under the French, the fundamental decisions as to what constituted an acceptable economic way of life had not been satisfactorily resolved.<sup>6</sup> Unusually large numbers of people could be identified neither with the trading class nor with the agricultural class. Rather they seemed to shift from one economic pursuit to another as their own fortunes and fancies directed them.

In the British dominion period, the real foundations of the later economic structure began in the form of a substantial industrious class of citizens who were devoted to agriculture. Many of the members of this group received large estates, portions of which they subdivided. The more influential members became the real aristocracy of British West Florida.<sup>7</sup> As the population increased, the land owners became wealthy, as much from the appreciation in the value of their lands and slaves as from their agricultural produce. Trade, which had made a healthy beginning under the French, proceeded to grow very rapidly during the British period. Except for the richest traders, who were located at such important cities as Pensacola, the mercantile profession did not insist upon social recognition and readily yielded aristocratic distinction to the resident owners of lands and slaves.

Although the Spanish period intervened between the British and United States periods, the fundamental character of the British land-owning classes did not change and it was carried over into the subsequent periods. Spain appreciated the great accomplishments of the British and was determined to capitalize upon their successes. To antagonize their new wards would definitely defeat the Spanish purpose, which was to have the loyal support of a large prosperous group of inhabitants who would not be easily won over to the side of the United States. The British settlers, even those with large estates, were permitted to retain their lands where such lands were actually occupied by the owners. Lands not being occupied were offered for sale to newcomers, most of whom were Americans of British ancestry. The price for the lands was little or nothing; usually a request to the local governor was sufficient. In order to encourage further settlement and agricultural development, the Spanish posted guaranteed prices for produce delivered to the king's warehouses. On the strength of these guarantees the Spanish government then sold to the inhabitants on credit slaves and other items. The Spanish expected, of course, to channel all of the trade through their own depots at New Orleans, and thus reap commercial benefits. They were probably disappointed in their net gains, for whenever things were not going well for the settlers, the demands of the British citizens were loud and firm for concessions in the form of higher prices or moratoria on such things as debts for slave purchases. Spain often granted their request in order to maintain a satisfactory public moral.<sup>8</sup> The Spanish officials, in the absence of a sufficient number of persons of their own nationality, even

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 190-191.

<sup>5</sup> Pickett, *op. cit.*, p. 236.

<sup>6</sup> De Champigny, *loc. cit.*, V, 129-38.

<sup>7</sup> Claiborne, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 136-40.



employed as their governmental agents trusted and favored British and American subjects. The most notable among them was Stephen Minor, an American, who was certainly the right hand man of Spain in the Yatchez country from 1795 to 1798. As a reward, he received rich grants of land.<sup>9</sup> Another trusted official was William Dunbar, a former British subject, who served as Spanish surveyor in 1798 in establishing the line of demarcation between the United States and the Spanish dominated lands to the south.<sup>10</sup>

Strangely enough, the direct influence of the British trading classes was not transferred into the territory. As soon as the Spanish assumed control, trading became a privilege which depended upon government approval. Only a highly favored few of the British traders such as Panton were permitted to continue their activities and under strict Spanish supervision. The others retired from the scene. Even the group which won Spanish favor so prejudiced their position with the United States that they could not operate in the Mississippi Territory. With the elimination of both British and Spanish traders, the Mississippi Territory of 1798 saw the establishment of an entirely new trading class. It consisted of the "Yankee" traders who emigrated from the northern and eastern states with the avowed object of making fortunes from the rapidly expanding cotton-gin economy. Practically all of them were eligible bachelors and their qualifications as sons-in-law were carefully noted by the former British plantation aristocracy.

The coalition between the landed wealth, conservatism, and prestige of the old British settlers of the provincial period, and the new class of "Yankee" traders, achieved largely through marriage, became the controlling political element of the early Mississippi Territory. This group provided the capital and the managerial talent which made possible the great Bank of the Mississippi. Their efforts to safeguard their own funds and to advance their commercial interests directed the bank into sound and conservative channels. Examples of these individuals are: Stephen Minor, who served as president of the bank from 1812 until his death in 1815, and whose fortune was heavily invested in the stock of the institution; and William Dunbar, whose estate provided funds which enabled his Pennsylvania son-in-law, Samuel Postlethwaite, an arrival of about 1803, to purchase large holdings of shares, and to serve as president from 1815 until his death in 1825.

A few of the lessons learned under the Spanish were to have a holdover effect in the early days of the Territory. One of the most notable was the powerful effect a petition could have upon a government which was determined to please its citizens. The same type of requests to the Spanish by the British and American agricultural classes, in connection with price guarantees and moratoria, eventually were directed to the United States Government in the form of petitions for postponement of payment on purchases of government lands. They began in the Mississippi Territory about 1803 and continued for many years.<sup>11</sup>

Other petitions during early United States rule succeeded in replacing the first territorial governor, and in bringing about representative government far earlier than had been originally planned by the United States officials.

#### The Economic Structure of the Territory and Early State, 1798-1820.

With the replacement of Spanish rule by that of the United States in 1798, the economic system became a pioneer type with very few controls and consequently one

<sup>9</sup> Rowland, *Mississippi*, II, 247-49.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 663-65.

<sup>11</sup> Edwin C. Carter, *Territorial Papers of the United States*, V, 279-87, 430, 479-82, 497-505; VI, 330, 339-41, 406-10, 419-20, 426-27, 501-2, 576-77, 682-83.

which offered practically no restraints to rapid economic development. The Territory at first adopted only the most rudimentary laws, and it was not until 1824 that a reasonably complete code was approved.<sup>12</sup> No fixed prices were established either for items of production or consumption, although unsuccessful legislative efforts were directed toward the establishment of quality standards for Mississippi cotton intended for export.<sup>13</sup>

Almost simultaneously with this earliest period of U. S. rule, there developed the great profit potentials of Mississippi-grown cotton. The constantly increasing demand from Europe and the eastern seaboard made the market capable of absorbing more than could be produced in the South for years to come; at the same time the cotton gin had lowered the planters' production costs. The result was assured success for almost any one who sought to engage in the business of cotton production. The key to great wealth lay in the rapid construction of cotton gins and in the quick conversion of the agricultural resources of the area into the raising of cotton. Already permanently established in the area of this unregulated economy of such great profit potentials, were the experienced, educated, affluent members of the old British-American agricultural group. Although they might be classed as conservatives by French colonial standards, those who had large holdings of potentially good cotton land could not fail to profit. The more aggressive members realized the great opportunity that existed and many took full advantage of it. William Dunbar wrote to his friend John Ross in August, 1797, that there was "no doubt that the foundation of a large fortune may be laid now within this country... Cotton has become the universal crop of the country. Last year half my crop was cotton..."<sup>14</sup> The present year I expect to gather at least 20,000 pounds clean cotton."<sup>14</sup> Dunbar also realized the great wealth which would come without effort to holders of fine agricultural lands. He pointed out that lands located on "the banks of the Mississippi not higher than Natchez," which would become "intrinsically worth more than any part of the known world," could be purchased in 1798 for \$2 or \$3 per acre," in spite of the fact that they would "soon fetch \$20."<sup>15</sup>

No doubt the class that benefited most was this established plantation-owning group. They had received immense land holdings for almost nothing, had acquired and paid for slaves under British and Spanish rule, and were now capable of large production of cotton. Although the most of them seem to have been good managers, the inefficiencies of the less able agricultural administrators were easily offset by the appreciations in land values. The old families were in a highly preferred economic position. They became very rich, creating a great disparity between themselves and their new neighbors, the settlers who were pouring in from the eastern United States.

It was the plantation owners who were the unquestioned social and economic leaders of their day. An atmosphere of culture and refinement became a necessity for themselves and their families. One of them, "having 5 or 6 daughters to educate," was desirous of getting "a female teacher competent to teach them Reading, Writing, and Cyphering as well as Needlework," and would "board her in his own house, which is one of the best in the Territory and give her five hundred dollars a year beside."<sup>16</sup> It was this plantation-owning group which was the principal element represented in the early control of the Bank of Mississippi.

<sup>12</sup> Mississippi Code, 1824.

<sup>13</sup> Mississippi Territory, Journal of the Legislative Council, October 3, 1803.

<sup>14</sup> William Dunbar to John Ross, August 21, 1797, in Letter Book of William Dunbar. <sup>15</sup> Dunbar to Ross, May 7, 1798.

<sup>16</sup> Thomas Rodney to Caesar Rodney, May 23, 1806, Rodney Letters.

A second class, one not far behind the plantation owners in prestige, was the merchant trading class, made up largely of the sharp "Yankee" traders who had come from New Jersey and Pennsylvania. They had completely displaced the French, British, and Spanish traders. It was they who accepted the cotton from the plantation owner and exchanged it for imported goods from the northern and eastern United States and England. Some of them also sought to engage in local manufactures but there was no strong legislative sentiment which favored them and the operation of their own plantations proved to be a more profitable sideline. These traders, particularly those who were fortunate enough to marry into the old plantation owning families, employed a large amount of capital; and the more successful among them exercised a great deal of business acumen in their dealings. After the introduction of the steamboat in 1811, their position as traders became still more important. This class was also strongly represented in early Mississippi politics as well as in the establishment and management of the Bank of the Mississippi.

A third class, which might be called professional, included aggressive and intelligent government officials and young lawyers who came from the east. Few of them were averse toward supplementing their professional earnings with land trading activities and part-time cotton farming. In this group one of the greatest obstacles to riches was a shortage of investment capital. Those who had economic means back home upon which they could draw were in a definitely fortunate economic position.

The fourth class consisted of the mechanics and laborers, who enjoyed relatively good wages in a prosperous economy.

The fifth and last class consisted of slaves, whose numbers were growing very rapidly under the constantly increasing purchases of the plantation owners.

Throughout the Mississippi Territorial period, the Natchez country was a rich man's domain. A very great economic disparity prevailed between the established land-owning classes and the others. The scarcest item in the area was cash, which on sound and conservative investments, i.e., in the purchase of lands, slaves, and the financing of outlays for the next year's crop, brought 12 to 18 per cent per annum. The members of the old British-American land-holding class profited greatly as they sold portions of their lands and loaned the proceeds to the thousands of new immigrants who moved into the Territory. The early arrivals among the "Yankee" trader class also became very prosperous and both the above classes naturally became identified with the Bank of the Mississippi.

The influx of new settlers was of especially large proportions following the Battle of New Orleans in 1815. Great prosperity flourished for the next four years under the stimulation of cotton prices of 25 to 36 cents a pound. Growth in population was so rapid that practically anyone could profit very nicely by engaging in businesses designed to supply the wants of the later immigrants. Even the poorer elements in the population, thinking that they too were on the road to prosperity, did not see themselves as a group with special interests. Because of this universal prosperity and economic unity, there was little opposition in the legislature of 1818 to granting the Bank of the Mississippi a twenty-two year monopoly over all Mississippi banking activities.

#### The Economic Structure in Transition, 1820-1844.

It was the crisis of 1819-20 with its sharp break in cotton prices that emphasized the disparity between the new settlers and the older wealthy families. The local political campaigns of late 1819, the second election following the admission of Mississippi to statehood, engendered a split between the rich and the



poor. George Poindexter, who was elected governor over Winchester, the candidate most favored by the Natchez voters, was the first major politician to challenge the cause of the bank and the wealth it represented. In effect, this campaign was also the signal for a contest between the symbol of wealth that was Natchez, and the rest of the state.

As new immigrants arrived, many of them, being without the means of establishing themselves in the rich Natchez area, chose to settle on the inexpensive and less productive lands of the interior. The initial development of these lands and the ultimate payment for those which had been purchased on government credit created a sizeable demand for bank loans. The rich Natchez area, with its great bank which was still owned by the wealthy aristocrats, was now in total control of the bank credit of the state. Its hold could not be broken by legislative action, and the bank's managers did not choose to be generous with their loans. There is little wonder that the Natchez area and the Bank of the State of Mississippi, as the institution was called after February 4, 1818, became political targets of the common man. A long drawn out struggle took place, with the opposition to the bank gaining rapidly under the influx of thousands of new settlers. The conflict finally ended in 1831, with the old bank's agreeing to going out of the commercial banking field.

The enthusiasm of the backwoods people over their victory resulted in the creation of a great oversupply of public and private means of manufacturing bank credit. By 1837, full advantage had been taken of these facilities and enthusiasm over their workings had led to a political fanaticism which demanded more and greater banks. The last one, the state-owned Union Bank, ended the era with the greatest financial crash in the history of the state. By 1840, the economic structure of the state was in chaos and the long, slow chain of events leading to recovery was just beginning. Not even conservative Natchez had escaped the deluge; the speculative mania had consumed also the members of the old guard, most of whom had fallen prey to the policy of easy money and the pitfalls of bank credit gone wild.

## II. BUSINESS ACTIVITY

Business activity in the colonies fluctuated widely, depending as it did upon two highly variable factors: (1) prices and conditions of crops; (2) European aid. With the local economy almost totally agricultural, a depression would follow almost any wholesale crop failure. If the mother country did not immediately come to the rescue with a large shipment of food supplies, starvation conditions would usually result. On the other hand, good crops plus the rapid influx of European supplies, such as occurred during some of the periods of intense colonial promotions, would produce large scale prosperity. Local bank credit did not figure in expanding or contracting the flow of colonial commerce, because there were no banks in the colonies. Often, however, local attempts to establish currency systems had effects upon business activity similar to those which might have resulted from changes in the volume of bank credit. Also, currency experiments in Europe, especially those of John Law, had some effect upon business activity in the colonies.

In the period of United States rule, business activity continued to fluctuate between very great extremes. Conditions and prices of crops continued to be the chief element affecting business activity. Since the main crop was cotton, the principal market for which was in England, the Mississippi economy was still dependent to a large extent upon business conditions in Europe. Added to these factors was an accelerating item not present before in large measure: local bank credit. It came into the lower Mississippi Valley in 1805 with the establishment of an office of the Bank of the United States in New Orleans. The Bank of Louisiana was opened in the same year in New Orleans, and in 1809 the Bank of the Mississippi was authorized to begin business in Natchez. After the advent of these



institutions, bank credit began to play an increasingly important part in producing the changes in business activity, which occurred in Mississippi. Its effects were particularly notable in the crisis of 1819-20 and 1837-40.

Information dealing with business fluctuations prior to 1800 is taken from business annals and the conclusions drawn are necessarily very general. Following 1800, it has been possible to rely more heavily upon recognized statistical works.

#### Serious Depression, 1699-1710.

The first eleven years of the existence of the colony of Louisiana were ones of great physical hardships, including disease and hunger. The major underlying factors were: (1) the neglect of the colonists by the French crown; and (2) the failure of the colonists to establish a local agricultural program sufficient to provide for their own subsistence. Famine conditions prevailed in 1700, 1704, 1706 and 1710. Each time the situation was temporarily relieved, after much suffering, by the arrival of a ship from France or the West Indies or by the assistance of the friendly but also poverty-stricken Biloxi Indians.<sup>17</sup> In 1700, "the colony languished; the earth was not cultivated" and "famine and sickness" severely reduced the population.<sup>18</sup> These conditions continued into 1701, and Bienville, "deploring the condition of his people, and seeing the necessity of tilling the earth," urged the French government to "send him laborers rather than the vicious and the idle, who roamed the forests in search of mines and Indian mistresses."<sup>19</sup> Starvation conditions were relieved by the arrival of food direct from France.<sup>20</sup> Similar famine conditions in 1704 were also relieved by the arrival of a French war vessel which "re-established abundance" among a people who had been "forced to disperse themselves along the coast, procuring subsistence upon fish and oysters."<sup>21</sup> In 1706, Iberville informed the French Crown that "famine again prevailed in the unhappy colony of Louisiana,"<sup>22</sup> and a year later the colonists still had not "made plantations ample enough from which to derive a support."<sup>23</sup> As late as 1710, Bienville was "obliged to distribute his men among the Indian towns to procure something to eat."<sup>24</sup>

#### Depression, 1711-1717.

Beginning in 1711 a very slightly improved agricultural situation and a little more considerate treatment from the mother country proved conditions just enough to lift the colonists above the starvation level. Even so, the colony, "still remained in a precarious situation."<sup>25</sup>

In 1712, hope of colonial prosperity was revived when the crown granted to the rich Crozat the exclusive privilege of the commercial development of Louisiana.<sup>26</sup> Although he expended virtually all his great wealth, at the end of his five year attempt to develop Louisiana, "the colony continued to languish,"<sup>27</sup> and "commerce

<sup>17</sup> A. J. Pickett, *op. cit.*, pp. 169-182.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 169.

<sup>19</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>20</sup> Pickett, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 173.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 175.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 177.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 182, Charles Gayarré, *Histoire de la Louisiane*, I, 78-91, from footnote in A. J. Pickett, *History of Alabama*, p. 173.

<sup>25</sup> Pickett, *op. cit.*, pp. 183-84.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 185.

<sup>27</sup> J. W. Monette, *op. cit.*, I, 215.

and agriculture had not prospered."<sup>28</sup> However, the population had "slowly increased" to "about seven hundred souls," double the figure of five years before.<sup>29</sup> Official opinion in the French government was that no single individual in France, not even Crozat, had sufficient wealth to develop the colony. Only an association of men such as the Western Company could succeed in turning Louisiana from a liability into a great natural resource.<sup>30</sup>

#### Recovery, 1718-1720.

The colonists soon began to fare better under the intense promotional activities of the Western Company, which in 1717 replaced Crozat as the sole exploiter of Louisiana.<sup>31</sup> This gigantic corporate enterprise, under the sponsorship of the brilliant John Law, began to demonstrate the advantages of its huge resources by exporting population and goods to the New World in great numbers. In 1719, "vessels from France had constantly brought over to Louisiana liberal supplies of provisions, merchandise, and not unfrequently distinguished persons and emigrants, thus adding to the number and giving character to her population, and causing her slowly to emerge from the supineness and insignificance of former times."<sup>32</sup>

The sheer bigness of this promotion, which was financed entirely by French savings and taxes, produced economic recovery. The only real business was that of the corporation, which at first was almost altogether of a promotional nature. Most of the schemes from which the immigrants had hoped to acquire immediate riches were soon acknowledged failures. These included the disappointments in not discovering important mineral deposits including gold, silver, and precious stones. However, as the new inhabitants were gradually forced by economic necessity to turn to agriculture as a means of livelihood, they found the Western Company ready to sell them slaves who could work the fields. The use of slaves particularly appealed to those Europeans who had not come to the New World to engage in toilsome physical tasks. From 1719, the year in which heavy slave importations were begun, "Louisiana began to prosper."<sup>33</sup> By 1720, the colony was giving "signs of durable vitality."<sup>34</sup>

The Natchez country fared exceedingly well from the promotional activities of the Western Company. The area had been opened to settlement with the establishment of Fort Rosalie in 1716, and only a few months before Law's company began its task of colonial improvement, a steady increase in population took place, the newcomers consisting largely of French soldiers and workmen.<sup>35</sup> In 1719, the introduction of slavery on a large scale made the fine agricultural lands of Natchez particularly attractive, and settlement became very rapid.<sup>36</sup> In 1720, there arrived "a colony of sixty settlers for the grant of St. Catherine among the Natchez Indians. They were followed soon afterward by two hundred and fifty others, for the same grant in charge of Bouteaux."<sup>37</sup>

#### Depression, 1721-1724.

In 1721, with recovery never having developed into a genuine prosperity, the people of Louisiana were once more beset with real hard times. Early in the year famine "universally prevailed in the colony."<sup>38</sup> In 1722 the troops stationed at

<sup>28</sup> A. J. Pickett, *op. cit.*, p. 211.

<sup>29</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>30</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>31</sup> Pickett, *op. cit.*, pp. 211-22.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 220.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 221.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 222.

<sup>35</sup> Rowland, *History of Mississippi*, I, 198-199.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 203.

<sup>37</sup> Monette, *op. cit.*, I, 230.

<sup>38</sup> Pickett, *op. cit.*, p. 225.

Mobile and Biloxi were temporarily dispersed among the Indians to live on their scanty crops of corn and beans.<sup>39</sup> In that year, also, news arrived of the failure of the Bank of France and the flight of John Law. "Louisiana, herself, was deeply involved in the failure, and her inhabitants...feared that the government of France would abandon them."<sup>40</sup> Abandonment was not complete, for "some supplies continued to arrive;"<sup>41</sup> but it was so nearly so "that the inhabitants became destitute of provisions."<sup>42</sup> The "officers were obliged to dismiss the garrisons of Mobile and Biloxi, and send them to the Choctaw nation to procure subsistence among the Indians, while many of the colonists abandoned their homes and betook themselves to the sea-side to procure a scanty living upon fish and oysters."<sup>43</sup> Other embarrassments of 1722 were military desertions, a great hurricane which swept the coast, and the "worthlessness of the paper money hitherto used in the colony." To remedy the latter, a locally sponsored and engraved currency known as "cards" was "substituted after the notes were suppressed."<sup>44</sup>

In 1723, conditions became steadily worse. In September of that year in "addition to all the other misfortunes of the times, which operated severally upon the people of Louisiana," there came a great equinoctial storm. The "crops had just approached maturity, and the whole southern portion of the province was greatly injured." Such was the violence of the storm at New Orleans that "the church, the hospital, and thirty houses were leveled with the ground; three vessels lying in the river were thrown ashore and nearly destroyed. Much damage was sustained at Mobile, Biloxi, and Natchez. Several vessels at Biloxi were entirely lost. The crops of rice were destroyed; many houses of the planters were blown down and their plantations otherwise injured." In consequence, the scarcity of provisions was greatly increased, and famine seemed to stare them in the face. "Supplies from France were cut off by the financial embarrassments of the mother country consequent upon the failure of Law's schemes; and many began to despair at the continuation of the untoward circumstances which brooded over the colony. Many, discouraged at these things, longed to see once more the vine-clad hills of France."<sup>45</sup>

Added to those problems was a continued dissatisfaction with the currency. The Western Company attempted to restore the value of the livre by declaring it to be worth one fourth of a Mexican dollar, a gold equivalent in terms of present United States money of about forty-two cents. The Company itself seems to have been none too confident of the future of the livre, for it issued enormous new amounts, and at the same time increased its prices upon everything it sold to the planters. As a result, the cheap money continued to drive gold and silver from circulation, and creditors became even more resolutely determined not to accept livres at their declared value.<sup>46</sup>

The year 1724 seems to have been the low point in public morale. The fact that "the agricultural resources of the country were just beginning to develop" went unnoticed. Instead of looking to the future, nearly everyone seemed to be searching out scape-goats upon which to fix the blame for past misfortunes. Religious and racial persecutions took place through Bienville's "Black Code", barring Jews from the colony and demanding that only the Catholic religion should be tolerated for Europeans and slaves.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Claiborne, *op. cit.*, I, 90.

<sup>40</sup> A. J. Pickett, *op. cit.*, p. 228.

<sup>41</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>42</sup> Pickett, *op. cit.*, p. 229.

<sup>43</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>44</sup> Pickett, *op. cit.*, p. 231.

<sup>45</sup> J. W. Monette, *op. cit.*, I, 250.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 240, 250-51.

<sup>47</sup> Pickett, *op. cit.*, p. 233.



Possibly the source of most of the dissatisfaction came from the debt and price situation, which continued unsettled into 1724. The rapid increase of paper money "had removed all the restraints which a prudent economy and long experience had established for the regulation of business and the proper accumulation of property."<sup>48</sup> With the collapse of Law's currency to about half its former value, the nominal value of every species of property on the increase, creditors demanded payment of debts in specie. Unfortunately, hard money was virtually unobtainable, for Law's paper money had reacted sharply on the local supply of silver and gold, and had "driven both from circulation and from the province." Later in the year, creditors refused to receive paper money "at any rate of discount, and it became utterly useless." Specie became so dear that there was "an onerous augmentation" of debts "beyond the possibility of payment."<sup>49</sup> The government was blamed for not authorizing some equitable legal method of settlement. This it did by recognizing Mexican dollars as legal tender at one and seven-eighths times their usual value, permitting them to return again to their old levels as soon as debtors had had a full opportunity to utilize them in payment of their obligations.<sup>50</sup>

#### Recovery, 1725-1727.

In 1725 the "embarrassments of the last two years had nearly passed over", and before the end of the year "the province had in a great measure recovered from the effects of financial embarrassments." In 1726, improvement was still more marked as "agriculture began to flourish", a "healthy state of trade began to pervade every department of the province;" and heavy immigration continued. In 1727 the situation improved even more.<sup>51</sup>

#### Prosperity, 1728-1729.

In 1728 and most of 1729, the colony was "in its highest state of prosperity."<sup>52</sup> Its "fields were cultivated by more than two thousand negroes; cotton, indigo, tobacco and grain were produced; skins and furs of all descriptions were obtained in a traffic with the Indians; and lumber was extensively exported to the West India islands."<sup>53</sup>

#### Depression, 1730-1732.

In the closing months of 1729 the Natchez Indians massacred most of the large number of French settlers in the Natchez area.<sup>54</sup> Within a short time they proceeded similarly against the much smaller settlement to the north among the Yazoo Indians.<sup>55</sup> The few French who escaped fled to the New Orleans section. These perfidious deeds affected the outlook of the entire province. They arrested the "rapid strides of prosperity, and shrouded all things in sadness and gloom."<sup>56</sup>

The financial burden of prosecuting a retaliatory attack on the Natchez Indians was very costly to the Company of the Indies, the current name of the grand commercial monopoly which still controlled the colony. Unfortunately, the company had never been able to bring its expenses under control and the additional military outlays were more than it could bear. Abandoning all hope for making a profit from the "American wilderness", the company, on January 23, 1731, petitioned the

<sup>48</sup> Monette, op. cit., I, 251-52.

<sup>49</sup> Idem.

<sup>50</sup> Idem.

<sup>51</sup> Monette, op. cit., I, 252-53.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., I, 254.

<sup>53</sup> A. J. Pickett, op. cit., p. 236.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., pp. 243-47.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., pp. 248-51.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., p. 236.



king for the surrender of its charter which still had more than a decade to run.<sup>57</sup> The request was readily granted, and on the 10th of April 1732, a royal proclamation was issued declaring the entire province of Louisiana free to all the king's subjects, with equal rights as to trade and commerce. In an effort to revive commerce, "all duty was removed from merchandise exported from France into the colony and on exports from the colony to France. The colonists began to prosper and trade at once expanded."<sup>58</sup> Unfortunately, the Natchez country did not enjoy these benefits. Although the French had defeated the Natchez Indians by the end of 1732, very few Frenchmen returned to the Natchez country. From 1730 until 1764 that area ceased to play any important part in the economy of Louisiana.

#### Slow Recovery, 1733-1740.

The improvement in trade was quite satisfying for a time. Accompanying it there was a "partial and temporary" peace with the Indian tribes.<sup>59</sup> This peace was short-lived; for in 1734, the English, operating from Georgia, began to encourage their old friendships with the Chickasaws. This was an easy thing to do, for the French had prejudiced all local Indians against them by their merciless annihilation of the Natchez nation. One of the ways in which the Chickasaws operated against the French was in preying upon their traders. Thus the French, following a carefully laid plan of the British, were forced to begin a campaign designed to establish themselves as masters of the Indians.<sup>60</sup> The result was a six-year series of costly military operations, none of which could be called successful. In the spring of 1740 peace was agreed upon between the French and the Chickasaws with neither being regarded as the victor. In spite of the expensive and disappointing Indian wars, the "population and wealth of Louisiana" had "continued to increase gradually." Agricultural products of the colony were the principal items entering into export trade.<sup>61</sup>

#### Prosperity, 1741-1752.

Indian troubles ceased from 1741 to 1751. The British were almost totally absorbed in their war with the French south of the St. Lawrence. This gave the French in Louisiana their big opportunity. The "whole Valley of the Mississippi" yielded to her dominion and the native Indian tribes "became her allies." The profitable trade relationship with the Indians was restored. Throughout the colony "agriculture continued to flourish," and commerce "began rapidly to extend its influence and to multiply its objects under the stimulus of individual enterprise. Capitalists embarked with alacrity into agriculture and commerce. The trade between the northern and southern portions of Louisiana had greatly augmented, as well as that from New Orleans to France and foreign countries."<sup>62</sup> The Marquis de Vaudreuil arrived in New Orleans on May 10, 1743, to become governor succeeding Bienville. Among his accomplishments which established the colony upon a much sounder basis were: (1) special attention to the condition of the levees on the Mississippi; (2) stabilization of the currency, and (3) prompt relief measures following a great hurricane in 1746.

Beginning in 1748 a speculative mania, local in nature, caused an inflationary boom. The colony was in a highly satisfactory economic condition produced largely by a flourishing agriculture, but local citizens began to see even greater profits in contraband trade with the Spaniards of Mexico and Havana. Some accounts indicate

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., p. 275.

<sup>58</sup> Rowland, History of Mississippi, I, 237.

<sup>59</sup> Monette, op. cit., I, 274.

<sup>60</sup> Pickett, op. cit., p. 281.

<sup>61</sup> J. W. Monette, op. cit., I, 292.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., I, 295.

that agriculture suffered from the large scale desertion of the soil in favor of speculation.<sup>63</sup> The more general impression seems to be that all elements of the population, including agriculturists, enjoyed a large-scale speculative boom. In 1752, according to Monette, "plantations lined the banks of the river for twenty miles below, and for a much greater distance above" New Orleans. Moreover, "the whole coast was a fine state of cultivation."<sup>64</sup> A small amount of resettlement had actually taken place in the Natchez region, where tobacco "was cultivated in considerable quantities."<sup>65</sup> The great boom which climaxed the twelve years of prosperity ended with the return of the British-French-Indian conflicts.

#### Recession, 1752-1763.

From 1752 to 1763 the local population seemed beset with increasingly adverse circumstances, for which the British were in a very large measure responsible. On October 18, 1748, they had ended their Northern or Arcadian War and "now again had leisure to indulge in their former practices of intrigue with the Southern Indians, and especially with the Choctaws and Chickasaws."<sup>66</sup> The trying conditions which resulted were largely outside the control of the settlers. Under the constant harrying of the English the colony was reduced by 1763 to a "state of complete destitution."<sup>67</sup>

The troubles commenced in 1752 with the failure of a gigantic attempt of the Marquis de Vaudreuil to defeat the Chickasaw Indians, who actually had been aroused by England to such an extent that they began the hostilities. The Marquis was very soon replaced as governor, largely as a result of his military shortcomings. His successor, Kerlerec, arrived on February 3, 1753. This new administration, which lasted until 1763, accompanied the declining years of the French period in the Lower Mississippi Valley. It also paralleled a world-wide conflict in which England defeated France. Although Louisiana was spared the "horrors of invasion" because of her "remote situation" and "inaccessible position,"<sup>68</sup> she nevertheless suffered a "succession of turmoils and vexations."<sup>69</sup> Kerlerec's government was "prompt and energetic", but the major problems which it encountered were beyond the control of the local authorities. One factor which proved very embarrassing to the colonists was the steadily depreciating value of the paper currency of France.<sup>70</sup> The low point in morale and in the economy came in 1763 with the transfer of Louisiana to England and Spain. England received the French lands east of the Mississippi River beginning at a point a short distance above New Orleans; and Spain was given title to all the remainder of Louisiana, including the great French capital of New Orleans.<sup>71</sup> The British portion furnished the lands which later became the Mississippi Territory. That section now becomes the subject of major interest.

#### Rapid Recovery, 1764-1772.

The most notable feature of the British period was the rapid immigration and settlement of the agricultural lands, particularly those of the Natchez region. The Natchez country, from the beginning of British rule, received the lion's share of the new settlers, most of whom came from Great Britain, from the British colonies in North America and in the West Indies. These were added to the small number of

<sup>63</sup> De Champigny, loc. cit., V. 129.

<sup>64</sup> J. W. Monette, op. cit., I, 296.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., I, 297.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., I, 288.

<sup>67</sup> Claiborne, op. cit., I, 155.

<sup>68</sup> Monette, op. cit., I, 303.

<sup>69</sup> Rowland, History of Mississippi, I, 244-45.

<sup>70</sup> J. W. Monette, op. cit., I, 305.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., I, 306-7.

French who chose to remain in the Natchez country. The size of this latter group must have been very small, indeed, for the total number of French who had settled in the area now occupied by all of British West Florida numbered only about 800. They owned 1200 slaves.<sup>72</sup> Even this small group of Frenchmen and slaves was further reduced when many of the French "refused to submit themselves to the hated dominion of England," and retired into the Spanish section, now knowing that it, too, no longer belonged to France.<sup>73</sup>

During the early years of the British period, there are few references to hard times in British West Florida. One such instance was a serious epidemic which occurred at Mobile in 1765 and delayed the city's progress for several years; another also occurred at Mobile in 1772 in the form of a series of the "most awful storms."<sup>74</sup> These localized setbacks were not at all typical of the entire area, where slaves continued to be imported, and sugar, indigo, cotton, and tobacco were extensively cultivated.<sup>75</sup>

#### Prosperity, 1773-1779.

In 1772 Peter Chester "assumed the government of the province" and under his "auspices it flourished for a long time."<sup>76</sup> "The people prospered, and their valuable products continued to increase."<sup>77</sup> "All the necessities of life were abundant and cheap." According to Claiborne, "profound peace and good order prevailed in West Florida, and no colony in the British empire, or elsewhere, was in a condition more happy and prosperous."<sup>78</sup> The cultivation of cotton "was encouraged by the whole commercial policy of the parent country."<sup>79</sup> The institution of slavery continued to receive the strongest possible endorsement from the British; through its employment the production of cotton, indigo, and sugar was greatly extended.<sup>80</sup> Apparently no part of West Florida was in a more thriving condition than the Natchez region, where "emigrants continued to pour in, upon those fertile hills and alluvial bottoms, from all parts of 'his majesty's Atlantic plantations'."<sup>81</sup> After 1776 the progress of the Revolutionary War caused these new arrivals to assume a distinctly "Tory" character.<sup>82</sup>

#### Recession, 1780-1782.

The Natchez District, by far the most important of the West Florida settlements, with its population "almost entirely of British origin," was brought under the Spanish jurisdiction at the time of the fall of Baton Rouge in 1779. It was not until May 9, 1781, that the Spanish conquest of Louisiana was finally completed with the capture of the port of Pensacola.<sup>83</sup> In the intervening period and particularly toward the latter part, when Natchez citizens participated in an unsuccessful revolt against the Spanish at Natchez, the local economic, political, and military situation was in a turmoil. After the revolt, more than a hundred of the leading citizens fled for the east coast of the United States.<sup>84</sup> In spite of these departures, the first Spanish census of British West Florida, conducted in the Spring of 1785, showed that the population had increased to 3,477.<sup>85</sup> The great majority of this number consisted of persons of British ancestry who had settled in the area during the period of British dominion.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., I, 407.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., I, 404-5, 442.

<sup>74</sup> Pickett, op. cit., pp. 326-27.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., p. 323.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., p. 324.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p. 328.

<sup>78</sup> Claiborne, op. cit., pp. 115-16.

<sup>79</sup> Monette, op. cit., I, 407.

<sup>80</sup> Idem.

<sup>81</sup> Pickett, op. cit., p. 331.

<sup>82</sup> Monette, op. cit., I, 408.

<sup>83</sup> Rowland, History of Mississippi, I, 275.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., I, 290.

<sup>85</sup> Monette, op. cit., I, 466.



Prosperity, 1783-1787.

As soon as the excitement of the unsuccessful revolt died away, the British citizens who remained found the most considerate treatment by their conquerors. Even those who had participated directly in the revolutionary attempt and had been imprisoned in New Orleans were eventually pardoned and permitted to return. The former British trading firm of Pantón, Leslie, and Company was largely responsible for the intercession in their behalf. Among those who escaped to the east coast was Colonel Anthony Hutchins, who returned to amass considerable wealth, some of which was later employed in the establishment of the Bank of the Mississippi. Rowland says that "little criticism can be found with the manner in which the Spaniards dealt with the persons or possessions of those who had really committed an act of treason against their rule."<sup>86</sup> The Spanish not only withheld punishments but took steps to create business confidence in their administration, which never proved "harsh or cruel". Punishment "was mild...and serious crimes were rare".<sup>87</sup>

With these threats to prosperity removed, Louisiana "began to prosper as a Spanish province." "Trade from the interior, and commerce with foreign ports and with the colonial dominions of Spain began to develop the resources of the country, and to increase the strength and wealth of the settlements."<sup>88</sup> Emigration "from Spain, the West Indies, and Mexico continued to augment the population of all the settlements."<sup>89</sup> The English-speaking population, also increased steadily "through births and by frequent additions from the American states to the north."<sup>90</sup> The growth in this latter class of the population was most notable in the West Florida districts, of which Natchez was by far the most populous. In 1788, 2679 persons resided there, as compared with 1468 in the Mobile district and a total of 6376 for all of West Florida.<sup>91</sup> The latest settlers of the Natchez district "ceased to be of the Tory class," but were "subjects of the new Republic, who came to acquire wealth on the rich valley lands which they believed would soon pass into the keeping of the United States." They were "men of good breeding, social position and wealth, unlike the great body of poor whites who went over the Alleghenies to better their condition both socially and materially." Their characteristics combined most amicably with those of the "high class Spanish officials" who governed them.<sup>92</sup> Both the older British population and the new settlers, most of whom were English speaking, were permitted to "thrive and apply their own methods, manners, and customs to their private and social affairs."<sup>93</sup> The result was that all the English-speaking inhabitants became so much "absorbed in acquiring wealth" they failed to concern themselves very much about "either the customs or rituals of their Catholic friends."<sup>94</sup> Louisiana "continued to enjoy a high degree of prosperity" and population and commerce increased." The "river trade with Upper Louisiana and the settlements upon the Ohio and its tributaries" became very active, and "the Spanish dominion upon the Mississippi appeared to be increasing continually in importance and power."<sup>95</sup>

Recession in the Natchez Country, 1788-1791.

From 1764 until 1788 the economic development of the Natchez country and most of the remainder of West Florida followed lines quite similar to those of Louisiana

<sup>86</sup> Rowland, History of Mississippi, I, 291.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., I, 289, 293, 295.

<sup>88</sup> Monette, op. cit., I, 465-66.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., I, 465-66.

<sup>90</sup> D. Rowland, History of Mississippi, I, 294.

<sup>91</sup> J. W. Monette, op. cit., I, 477-78, (footnote referring to F. Martin, History of Louisiana, II, 99-100).

<sup>92</sup> Rowland, History of Mississippi, I, 295.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., I, 296.

<sup>94</sup> Idem.

<sup>95</sup> Monette, op. cit., I, 469.



as a whole. In 1788, however, the Natchez country and its neighboring districts began to assume a distinct economic and political character. A brief explanation is called for concerning the nature of the economic differences which began to develop between the province of Louisiana as a whole, which was dominated by New Orleans, and the Natchez country, which suffered as a result of the overall Spanish political and economic policy.

From the year 1788 the settled policy of Spain was "to acquire the western portion of the United States."<sup>96</sup> The plan included the establishment of Kentucky as the approximate dividing line, and the extension of all kinds of special privileges, including pensions and trade concessions to prominent citizens of that state as well as to the "western people generally." This design fitted perfectly into the economy of the "settlements on the Monongahela, the Ohio, the Kentucky and Cumberland Rivers", which had surplus products consisting of flour, pork, beef, whiskey, apples, cider, lumber, horses, cattle, and many other agricultural and manufactured products, which met with a ready sale in New Orleans." As a result of the Spanish efforts, aided by natural advantages, "men of enterprise and capital embarked their means in the navigation of the river and in the extension of western commerce."<sup>97</sup> New Orleans prospered greatly as the great controlling port of the Mississippi River. It "continued to augment in population and to extend its commerce. By the census of 1792 it was found to contain nearly six thousand inhabitants, with a proportionate increase in commercial importance."<sup>98</sup>

Natchez might have been expected to profit also from the expanding river commerce, for most of the surplus items of the western settlements were readily saleable at all points along the lower Mississippi. Instead, an economic recession immediately started in the Natchez country. Tobacco was its principal crop. "The king himself thought so well of it that he became the purchaser of all that passed inspection in the New Orleans warehouses."<sup>99</sup> The Spanish, in order to woo the commercial interests of the western states, suddenly withdrew the "king's patronage" from Natchez tobacco. This action which was taken without giving the Natchez planters time to adjust their plantings, permitted the Kentucky product to drive the chief Natchez crop from the local and export markets.<sup>100</sup> The result was a recession in business in the Natchez country, while great prosperity prevailed in New Orleans and in much of the rest of the Lower Mississippi Valley. The formerly prosperous planters of Natchez attempted to turn to other products, including corn, beef, and pork, but these, and most other items which Natchez could readily produce were already in plentiful supply in the New Orleans and export markets.

#### Depression, 1792-1794.

By the end of 1792, planters of the Natchez District were referring to their "distressed condition", and pointing out to the Governor that they were "deeply involved" in debts, and that it took "one hundred per cent more of the same produce to pay the same debts than it did four years ago." Merchants who had agreed to accept farm products at guaranteed prices in payment of debts now demanded cash instead. Some compromise was reached, the merchants agreeing to accept local produce, but at figures the planters considered far too low.<sup>101</sup>

During these years of depression there is little or no indication that extreme hardships were suffered in the Natchez country. The shortage of cash

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., I, 478.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., I, 479.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., I, 481.

<sup>99</sup> D. Rowland, Mississippi, I, 308.

<sup>100</sup> Idem.

<sup>101</sup> Claiborne, op. cit., pp. 139-40.

naturally brought about a credit deflation, for the planters were heavily in debt. But instead of starvation conditions such as the early French had suffered during times of economic reversals, the inhabitants were thrown back upon a subsistence type of agriculture, which was comfortable enough, but which provided few of the luxuries to which some of the planters had become accustomed. Neither did the local merchants attempt to foreclose on any large number of financially embarrassed planters, feeling evidently that even with the new lower guaranteed prices the debts could eventually be discharged.<sup>102</sup>

The search for a satisfactory money crop continued through 1794. Indigo "was considered a profitable business" for a few years but it lost ground steadily after 1794, when the yield was "greatly reduced and the quality deteriorated," as a result of an infestation of insect pests.<sup>103</sup>

#### Recovery, 1795-1797.

With the introduction of the cotton gin in 1795, cotton became the staple and the "people rapidly grew prosperous." The inventive talents of several local individuals contributed to the improvement of cultivation and ginning techniques.<sup>104</sup> After 1795 the price and the annual production of cotton largely determined the economic prosperity of the Natchez area. From 1795 through 1797 the New York price averaged above 35 cents per pound, and Mississippi production increased rapidly, as more plantation owners erected gins both for their own use and for hire to the public.<sup>105</sup> There was prosperity throughout the South, but residents of the Natchez district were seriously handicapped by Spanish economic policies until 1797.<sup>106</sup>

#### Prosperity, 1798-1802.

The price of cotton continued good, and in addition the creation of the Mississippi Territory under U. S. rule produced large scale immigration, primarily to the Natchez area.<sup>107</sup> Prosperity continued in the southern states,<sup>108</sup> and by 1800 Mississippi was coming in for her full share.<sup>109</sup> The spirit of the times was reflected in the words of William Dunbar, who resided at his plantation home, the Forrest, near Natchez. He said:

"This country is by soil and climate the most productive and certainly the most delicious spot now in the possession of the U. S. ...It is not in the power of imagination to calculate what will one day be its productions, its arts, manufactures, and the boundless extent of its commerce."<sup>110</sup>

#### Recession, 1802-1804.

A temporary set-back occurred in the price of cotton. From an average Natchez price of about 23 cents a pound for the crop of 1801-1802, there was a

<sup>102</sup> Idem. <sup>103</sup> Claiborne, op. cit., p. 140. <sup>104</sup> Ibid., p. 200. <sup>105</sup> James L. Watkins, King Cotton, 29.

<sup>106</sup> Business Annals, (National Bureau of Economic Research), 114; Arthur P. Whitaker, The Mississippi Question, 1795-1803.

<sup>107</sup> J. L. Watkins, op. cit., 29. <sup>108</sup> Thorp, op. cit., 114-15. <sup>109</sup> Whitaker, op. cit., p. 63.

<sup>110</sup> Letter of Sir William Dunbar to John Ross of Philadelphia, 23 May, 1799.

drop of about  $44\frac{1}{2}\%$ , to 13 cents per pound for the crops of 1802-1803 and 1803-1804.<sup>111</sup> The effect was felt by the local citizens, but the crop yield was satisfactory and profit margins were still sufficient to cause few hardships, except for those who were heavily in debt.

#### Prosperity, 1805-1807.

Natchez cotton prices recovered sharply to average about 19 cents a pound for this period, and crop yields were satisfactory, except for a slight decrease in 1806-1807.<sup>112</sup> In early 1807, Acting Governor Cowles Mead addressed the general assembly as follows: "I have great cause of congratulation to you on the near extinguishment of your debts--released from old burthens and blessed with a country rich in every pecuniary advantage you may now turn your attention to the useful ornaments of your Territory without passing the lines drawn by the honest finger of economy."<sup>113</sup> Rapid immigration continued and a fine export and import trade existed. The Mississippi Territory was being opened up for interior settlement as Indians were removed to selected areas. The newly-settled sections were also devoted to the production of cotton, although only the Natchez country produced the premium quality long staple which commanded a substantially better price.

#### Recession, 1808-1809.

The Embargo and Non-Intercourse Acts practically eliminated the European markets and also the markets of the eastern seaboard for Mississippi cotton. The local price fell to 15 cents a pound soon after the beginning of the period and to 12 cents near the end. Crop yields were very satisfactory, however, and the serious effects of the embargo were temporarily postponed.<sup>114</sup> It was at the end of this period that the Bank of the Mississippi was authorized, on December 23, 1809. Because of the recession, the bank could not raise the necessary capital and it was temporarily unable to open its doors for business. A slight recovery in cotton prices, which took place in the latter part of 1810, enabled the bank to raise its initial capital funds.

#### Depression, 1810-1811.

The continuation of the embargo resulted in very low prices of about 12 cents a pound and crop yields were off sharply in both 1809-1810 and 1810-1811.<sup>115</sup> The result was a very serious depression. The Bank of the Mississippi began operations during this depression, its directors having consumed almost eighteen months, from December 23, 1809, until June 10, 1811, in attempting to raise the capital funds.

#### Depression, 1812-1814.

Although the effects were lessened by war spending in the area in connection with the Greek War and the great Battle of New Orleans, this period, 1812-1814, was one of depression. Cotton apparently was not moving, except possibly in smuggling activities. Claiborne, referring evidently to the year 1814, says, "the war with Great Britain had brought down the price of cotton to seven or eight cents, and the crop then and for several preceding years, had been greatly re-

<sup>111</sup>

R. C. Weems, Jr., *The Bank of the Mississippi: A Pioneer Bank of the Old Southwest, 1809-1844*, Ph. D. Thesis (Columbia University, 1951), Appendix I, Table 13.

<sup>112</sup>

*Idem.*

<sup>113</sup>

Mississippi Territory, *Journal of the Legislative Council*, December, 1806, p. 10.

<sup>114</sup>

R. C. Weems, Jr., *op. cit.*, Appendix I, Table 13.

<sup>115</sup>

*Idem.*



duced by the rot." For three years, in succession, "the river lands had been overflowed. Neither real or personal property would command more than one-half their previous value."<sup>116</sup> The debt situation had become so serious that a law was passed which forced the creditor to accept cotton in payment of debts at 14 and 15 cents a pound.<sup>117</sup>

#### Great Prosperity, 1815-1818.

After the Battle of New Orleans, the price of cotton advanced steadily to attain a most attractive figure of 25-30 cents a pound by the picking time for the 1815-1816 crop.<sup>118</sup> Trade lanes to Europe were re-opened. As the price continued to increase, crop yields also expanded. This combination produced the greatest prosperity the Mississippi Territory had ever known. It was at the very height of this boom period, on February 4, 1818, that the Bank of the Mississippi, after having expanded tremendously as a private bank, became the official Bank of the State of Mississippi.

#### Crisis, 1819-1820.

A substantial break in cotton prices occurred, accompanied by a nationwide collapse in business activity. A record crop yield in 1818-1819 postponed some of the local effect until the next year, when prices dropped still more to around 15 cents per pound and yields also were reduced.<sup>119</sup> Politico-economic troubles soon began to make their appearance in connection with the new State of Mississippi, which had been created in 1817. Land purchase obligations due the Federal Government became difficult for the people to meet, and the Bank of the State of Mississippi had to reduce sharply its outstanding loans in the interest of its security and liquidity.<sup>120</sup>

#### Depression, 1821-1823.

The attempted recovery of 1821-1822, which was characterized by better cotton prices and a record yield, did not materialize. The crop year 1822-23 was one of the poorest of several years. This occurrence, combined with the continued deflationary policy pursued by the Bank of the State of Mississippi, held back recovery for another year.<sup>121</sup>

#### Recovery, Prosperity and Recession, 1824-1826.

This is one of the most interesting periods in the economic history of the Territory and State of Mississippi. Crop yields were satisfactory for all three years. The price of cotton followed a pattern largely established in Liverpool by very active speculators. It began its upward climb in 1824 from a figure of 14 cents a pound, reached the height of 33 cents in July of 1825, and then came down again to 11 cents in the latter part of 1826.<sup>122</sup> Mississippi planters profited in proportion

<sup>116</sup> J. F. Claiborne, *op. cit.*, p. 331.

<sup>117</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>118</sup> Arthur H. Cole, *Wholesale Commodity Prices in the United States, 1790-1861*, Statistical Supplement, p. 172.

<sup>119</sup> R. C. Weems, Jr., *op. cit.*, Appendix I, Table 13.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, Appendix I, Table 4.

<sup>121</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>122</sup> A. H. Cole, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 210, 214, 218.

to their success in selling at, or near, the peak prices which prevailed for a short time only in the middle of the year 1825. The general benefits were not widespread.

#### Depression, 1827.

Cotton prices dropped to all time lows in 1827, but the population was now so completely tied to the production of the staple that there was no other crop to which the citizens could conveniently turn for relief. In addition, the crop was one of the poorest in years.<sup>123</sup> Fortunately, the Bank of the State of Mississippi had finally strengthened its position to the point where credit contraction was no longer a necessity.<sup>124</sup> Nevertheless, the people needed a scapegoat on which to blame their troubles, and none seemed so appropriate as the official state bank.

#### Recovery, 1828-1832.

Cotton prices continued very very low, averaging only about 9 cents a pound at Natchez throughout the period.<sup>125</sup> There being little incentive to engage in cotton production, the people's surplus energies took two vigorous forms in 1828: (1) an attack against the Bank of the State of Mississippi, which was thought to be strangling the economic life of the state; and (2) an all-out blustering campaign for the election of Andrew Jackson. In both efforts they were successful. The old parent bank at Natchez and its thriving branches at Port Gibson, Woodville, and Vicksburg, all of which formed the entire state banking system of Mississippi, ceased operations on December 31, 1831, in favor of other newly created institutions. Although cotton prices were not improving from 1828 through 1832, the crop was expanding substantially, except in 1831-1832, when it showed a small decline from the previous year. As a result, prosperity was gradually restored.<sup>126</sup>

#### Prosperity, 1833-1836.

Cotton prices recovered rapidly and the size of the Mississippi cotton crop increased steadily.<sup>127</sup> More important was the rapid expansion of credit which took place through the creation of Mississippi's many new banks, and other corporations which were granted "banking privileges." By 1826, although the foundations of the economy were still essentially sound, credit had been granted in proportions which surpassed their real justification by millions of dollars.<sup>128</sup>

#### Double Crisis, 1837-1840.

A great crisis resulting from an over-expansion of credit took place in 1837. It was precipitated by the Specie Circular issued by the United States Treasury, which affected immediately the specie paying ability of all of Mississippi's banks. The embarrassments were temporarily stopped in 1838 by the creation of the greatest bank of all, the Union Bank of Mississippi, which procured \$5,000,000 in specie from a sale of state-guaranteed bonds. After the funds were exhausted, a second crisis took place which culminated in 1840 in complete economic disaster.<sup>129</sup>

<sup>123</sup> R. C. Weems, Jr., *op. cit.*, Appendix I, Table 13.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, Appendix I, Table 4.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, Appendix I, Table 4.

<sup>126</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>127</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>128</sup> Rowland, *Mississippi*, I, 190-200.

<sup>129</sup> R. W. Millsaps, "History of Banking in Mississippi", *Sound Currency*, March, 1903, pp. 16-48.

Slow Recovery and Eventual Prosperity, 1841-1860.

From 1841 until the Civil War, recovery was very slow, but also quite steady. Confidence in banks had been almost totally destroyed; only a very few existed, and no new ones were created. A sound banking system could have assisted the state greatly, but no one dared propose such a thing. Instead the citizens proceeded to look with great disfavor toward all types of credit manufacturing institutions. They carried on a campaign designed to force even the remaining banks out of business and repudiated those obligations of the state which had been incurred. In spite of these obstacles to complete recovery, Mississippi with practically no aid from banks, was in a prosperous condition in the 1850's.<sup>130</sup>

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., p. 47.



## Activities

### MAXWELL FIELD SPEAKERS AT SOCIAL SCIENCE SEMINAR

There will be a special session of the Social Science Research Seminar at three o'clock, February 18, in the auditorium of the Library. The featured speakers will be Dr. Carroll Shartle and Major Robert Beers of the Human Resources Research Institute at Maxwell Air Force Base. They will outline the research program of the Institute as it relates to research problems of the southern region.

A special invitation is being extended to all members of the staff to be present at that time.

### STUDY OF MISSISSIPPI ELECTORATE PUBLISHED BY CENTER

The latest publication of the Social Science Research Center is a study completed in January by Professor William Buchanan and entitled The Mississippi Electorate. It is an intensive analysis of the voting behavior of Mississippians in recent years, covering the size, characteristics and dynamics of the state's electorate. A summary of this study has been released to the press, and an abstract of it will appear in the March issue of the Social Science Bulletin. Anyone wishing to receive a copy of the full study may obtain one from the Social Science Research Center.

### COMMERCE AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS DAY

The Business School will celebrate the Commerce and Public Affairs Day on March 26. The principal events of the day will be an Annual Job Clinic and a meeting of the Social Science Round Table. The various departments of the School of Business and Industry plan to have impressive exhibits on display during the day. Some of these exhibits will be displayed for the remainder of the year. In addition, a number of exhibits will be displayed by business enterprises. The Job Clinic will bring a featured speaker and approximately 36 other men representing many different business houses. The advanced advertising of and the program for the Clinic will give prominence to the anniversary celebration.

The Social Science Round Table will feature an address by Dr. Charles P. Anson, of Auburn. Several hundred social scientists and social science teachers in this region are to be notified of this event, and the notices will feature this as a Round Table dedicated to the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the college. The Round Table dinner meeting will be in the Grill Banquet Room. Plates will be \$1.25 per person.

### COURSE IN MISSISSIPPI RESOURCES OFFERED

A new course entitled "Mississippi's Resources" is being offered during the second semester at Mississippi State College. It is designed especially for students who are majoring in public affairs in the School of Business and Industry, but other juniors and seniors are admitted to the class. Students in "Mississippi's Resources" have an opportunity to study the state's resources, the problems associated with their development, efforts to expand and diversify the economy such as the BAWI program and attempts to extend social services such as hospital facilities. The course is taught by Professor Lee B. Gaither, head of the department of resource-use education, who has devoted several years to a study of the resources of the state and published several articles on the subject.

### LIBRARY PURCHASES RARE SET OF DE BOW'S REVIEW

The Mississippi State College library has recently purchased a complete set of De Bow's Review. The set consists of forty-three volumes published in New Orleans from January, 1846 to June, 1880 with the exception of a period during the Civil War. The sub-title of volume 1, number 1 is "A Monthly Journal of Trade, Commerce, Commercial Polity, Agriculture, Manufactures,

Internal Improvements, and General Literature." According to the previous owner there is only one other complete set in existence, this being at Tulane University Library.

### *SOCIAL SCIENTISTS FEATURED IN EXPERIMENT STATION MEETING*

Four members of the Social Science staff at Mississippi State College read papers before the Social Science section of the Mississippi Agricultural Experiment Station Workers annual conference which met on the campus December 9-11, 1952. Professor W. E. Christian, Jr. of the Department of Agricultural Economics spoke on the subject "Opportunities for Increased Efficiency in Marketing Channels and Services for Locally Produced Products to Meet Changes Associated with Industrialization." Dr. Dorothy Dickins of the Experiment Station Home Economics Department spoke on "Home Management and the Home Produced Food Supply of Non-Owner Farm Families in Two Counties of Mississippi." At a special joint meeting with the Social Science Research Seminar, Professor Raymond Payne discussed "Community Research Focusing on Local Action as Exemplified by Civic Projects," and Professor A. Alexander Fanelli discussed "Opportunities for Interdisciplinary Research in the Social Sciences." Professor Payne is currently engaged in research by the Agricultural Experiment Station and the Social Science Research Center. Professor Fanelli is the Social Psychologist for the Social Science Research Center. Articles in the current issue of the Social Science Bulletin are adapted from the papers read at the conference.

### *GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY MEETING*

Members of the Mississippi State College department of geology and geography attended a special meeting of the Mississippi Geological Society on Tuesday evening, January 13, in the Edwards Hotel at Jackson. Dr. Maurice Ewing, director of Lamont Geological Observatory, Columbia University, presented an illustrated lecture on "The Atlantic Ocean Basin and its Margins." Members and guests attending this meeting from State College were Cecil P. Marion, Jr., James Stuart Pittman, Mr. and Mrs. Gene B. Martin, Jack E. Denson, James L. Ray, Stanley R. Clark, Billy D. Ellis, and Joe D. Dawson, Richard B. Mattox, Mr. and Mrs. Charles F. Upshaw.

### *REPRINTS OF "COUNTY REORGANIZATION" ARTICLE AVAILABLE*

Because of widespread interest in an article on "County Reorganization in Mississippi" written by Professor Gordon K. Bryan, a number of reprints of this study have been made. They are available as Social Science Studies - Government Series No. 7. Anyone desiring a copy may obtain it from the Social Science Research Center.

### *MISSISSIPPI HISTORICAL SOCIETY REORGANIZES*

The Mississippi Historical Society, which has not held a meeting since 1911, has been reorganized and will hold a meeting at Jackson on March 13-14, 1953. Dr. John K. Bettersworth served as a member of the Inter-room Executive Committee which has carried out the reorganization planning. Two members of the faculty of Mississippi State College will appear on the program in March. They are Dean R. C. Weems, Jr., who will read a paper, "The Makers of the Bank of Mississippi," and Professor James H. McLendon, whose topic will be "John A. Quitman, Fire-eating Governor." All persons interested in the history of Mississippi are invited to attend the March meeting. The membership fee for the Society is three dollars per year, which covers a subscription to the Journal of Mississippi History. Anyone wishing to join should send a check to Dr. W. D. McCain, War Memorial Building, Jackson, Mississippi.

### *HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT INSTITUTES RADIO SERIES*

In cooperation with the Starkville radio station WSSO, the department of history and government at Mississippi State College recently inaugurated a series of radio programs dealing with issues of current interest. Professor Robert A. Brent is in charge of these programs, serving both as program planner and moderator. The first program, given on December 1, was concerned with the Tidelands oil issue. Professors Gordon K. Bryan and J. H. McLendon served as the panel. On December 15

the topic was "The Electoral College as an Instrument of Choosing a President." Professors John K. Betterworth and W. J. Evans were the discussants. On January 6, Professors Gordon K. Bryan and Glover Moore were the panel guests in a discussion of "The Organization of Congress." Professors J. H. McLendon and William Buchanan were the panel guests on January 20, at which time the poll tax was the subject of discussion. On February 10 the topic of discussion was "The Military Man As President." Colonel John H. Fonvielle and Professor John K. Betterworth were the panel speakers. The series of radio broadcasts is designed to be given at intervals of approximately two weeks. Much favorable comment has been aroused by these discussions, and plans are underway to enlarge the scope of the series to include more guests from other departments of the college.

### *Personal Items*

A recent communication from PROFESSOR JOHN C. REDMAN of the University of Kentucky, who was formerly a member of the Agricultural Economics Department here, relates Professor Redman's current activities. He is engaged in studies of the economics of irrigation on Kentucky farms; the economics of the development of low income farms, low income regions and low income nations; and the economics of grain-roughage substitution in livestock feeding. Professor Redman is the author of an article, "Economic Aspects of Feeding for Milk Production," in the Journal of Farm Economics, for August, 1952. He is also preparing a bulletin on food utilization by dairy cows.

MR. J. V. PACE of the Agricultural Extension Service is the author of Looking Ahead in 1953 for Farming and Family Living, a mimeographed publication of the Agricultural Extension Service.

DEAN B. P. BROOKS of the School of Education attended a district meeting of the National Education Association in Atlanta, January 8-10. He also attended a conference at Gatlinburg, Tennessee, sponsored by the Kellogg Foundation, for the study of college programs for developing secretarial school administrators.

DEAN R. C. WEEMS, JR., School of Business and Industry, attended a meeting of the Mississippi Association of Purchasing Agents in Jackson on January 21, where he discussed the economic outlook for the coming year.

PROFESSOR EUGENE F. MITCHELL, head of Industrial Education Department at Mississippi State, is the newly elected vice-president of the Trade and Industrial Education section of the American Vocational Association. Professor Mitchell recently made a report to the Junior College Association on the findings of a series of occupational surveys now being conducted in the junior colleges of the state.

PROFESSOR MARION T. LOFTIN of the Division of Sociology and Rural Life attended the third annual conference on Geriatrics and Gerontology at the University of Florida, January 26-28.

PROFESSOR GORDON K. BRYAN has recently attended meetings of the Mississippi Economic Council committee on county government, which is drafting the final report on a special study of county governments in Mississippi, soon to be published. Professor Bryan served as consultant on this study.

DR. HARALD A. PEDERSEN of the Division of Sociology and Rural Life recently edited an article entitled "Attitudes Relating to Mechanization and Farm Labor Changes in the Yazoo-Mississippi Delta," which appeared in Land Economics, November, 1952.